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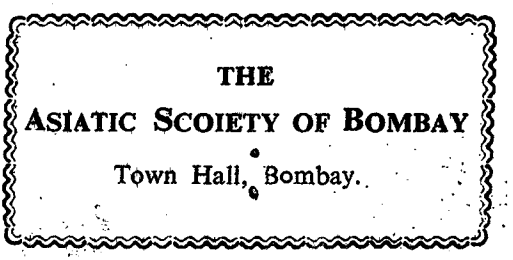

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LIFE

OF

PETRARCH.

COLLECTED FROM

MEMOIRES POUR LA VIE DE PETRARCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

24410 a.c

VOLUME THE SECOND.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Rarò magni errores nisi ex magnis ingeniis prodiere.

PETRARCH.

LONDON:

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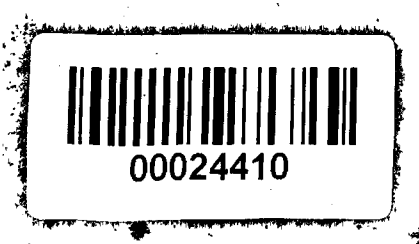
M.DCC.LXXVI.

THRICE happy minds that feel the power of friendſhip!
Oft do the Muſes on a beauteous eve,
The ſky ſerene, and drowſy nature huſh'd,
Vouchſafe celeſtial ſounds to friendly ears,
And raiſe their kindred minds with ſuch
Warm fancy, and [illegible] forms
As 'ſcape the vulgar intellectual eye.
Why need I launch into the praiſe of friendſhip!
Friendſhip, that beſt ſupport of wretched man!
Which gives us, when our life is painful to us,
A ſweet exiſtence in another's being!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THE

LIFE

OF

PETRARCH.

BOOK IV.

WE have ſeen in the life of Petrarch, that his ſorrows ſeldom came ſingle. His eyes were ſtill wet with tears for the death of Laura, when (the 3d of July 1348) he loſt Cardinal Colonna, the man who had been ſo many years his friend and protector. Petrarch ſeems to think he was deſtroyed by grief, brought on by the diſaſters in his family. By ſome it was ſaid he died of the plague. He loſt in the ſpace of five years, his 1347.

mother, and ſix of his brothers. Some time before the tragical death of his brother Stephen, he had a converſation with Petrarch, in which he deplored the loſſes he had ſuſtained. "Your father predicted them," ſaid Petrarch. The Cardinal demanded an account of this prediction. Petrarch was unwilling to comply with his requeſt: but the Cardinal inſiſted. Struck with what he heard, "Alas! ſays he, I fear my father will prove too good a prophet." This venerable old man was yet alive, and had attained almoſt the age of a hundred years. Petrarch wrote him a letter of condolence, as follows:

"UNFORTUNATE old man! What crime have you committed? How have you merited the puniſhment of a tedious life? You reſemble Metellus in your country, birth, riches, figure, and other qualities of mind and body, in an illuſtrious

trious and fruitful wife, in the conſular dignity, in the command of the Roman armies, in victories, and triumphs; in fine, in a great age and a fortune ſuſtained to the end: for the diſtreſſes you have undergone, ſerve only to raiſe your glory. But Metellus had no brother; you had five, more famed for their virtue than for their birth. He had four ſons, who exerciſed the offices of Cenſors, Prieſts, and Conſuls, and enjoyed the honours of triumph: you had ſeven ſons, one a Cardinal, another who would have borne a higher rank had he lived to receive it, three *Biſhops*, and two Generals, who, to ſay all in one word, have almoſt equalled their father's reputation; and ſix daughters, worthy of the greateſt praiſe. From this numerous and flouriſhing family, there has ariſen a multitude of children and grand-children, which cauſe you to reſemble the patriarchs of old. Wherever the Roman name is known, you paſs for the happieſt of men: but,

as Solon ſaid to the king of Lydia, 'No man can be called happy before death. The aſhes and the tomb are the only faithful witneſſes of the happineſs of life.' You would have been the greateſt example of human felicity, if the end of your life had anſwered the courſe of it. A long life is like a voyage of a few days. The heavens alter, the wind changes, the rudder muſt be turned, and the ſails folded up. Human life, like the ſea, is expoſed to frequent hurricanes, and the evening of the brighteſt day is often obſcured and tempeſtuous. The wife ought to ſay of the world, as Palinurus, that famous pilot in *Virgil*, did of the ſea, 'Shall I confide in that monſter?'

"You alone bear the weight of your loſſes, and you prove your fortitude and courage. Your beloved wife was happy as the wife of Evander, in that death ſpared her the grief to behold her children periſh. And as you reſembled Metellus

tellus in the beginning, ſo you may compare yourſelf to Priam in the end of life. The former was buried by his children, the latter lived to bury his whole family. The inconſtancy of fortune is ſuch, that we know not what we ought to fear or to hope. Shall I adviſe you to hope, or to deſpair? I will do neither: there would be too much preſumption in the one, and too much weakneſs in the other. You cannot hope for more children. When old age is the ſeaſon of marriage, it is as unnatural as harveſt in winter. You need not deſpair on this account; for have you not yourſelf? What poſſeſſion is more delightful than the enjoyment of a man's own ſoul? There have been fathers who have had a hundred children: Herotimes king of Arabia had that number. But rare as is ſuch an inſtance, it is ſtill more ſo to find men who enjoy themſelves. You have loſt the converſation of your children; converſe with yourſelf. In a life long and glorious as

yours, how many things may you recall, honourable and agreeable to reflect on! You foreſaw all that has happened to you. Recollect the converſation we had together at Rome: I have before my eyes that antient monument on which we leaned as we converſed on this ſubject. Tears are due to nature, but time ſhould dry them up. Collect all the ſtrength of your ſoul, and ſuſtain with courage this laſt aſſault of fortune. She triumphs more frequently by terror than by ſtrength. You have loſt the pleaſures you enjoyed, but in their ſtead you have gained a real happineſs. You have learned to diſtinguiſh the felicities of nature from the chimeras of the world; to diſcover truth in the midſt of the ſhades that ſurround it; to be convinced that the advantages of life were not your own; and to deſpiſe the empire of a blind goddeſs, the idol of vulgar minds. The more you have loſt, the leſs you have to loſe hereafter:

after: you came naked into this world, and naked ſhall you go out of it."

Petrarch, exhauſted by grief, addreſſes himſelf to death in theſe lines:

"Thou haſt taken from me the two treaſures who were my joy and my confidence: that ſtately column which ſerved me for ſupport, and that green laurel under whoſe ſhade my weary ſoul repoſed! Nothing can reſtore to me what I have loſt. What remains for me but to bemoan all my future days ſuch irreparable loſſes? Our life is like the ſhadow of the ſun paſſing over the plain. We loſe in a moment what we have been years in acquiring."

Soon after this letter of Petrarch's, old Stephen Colonna ſunk under the weight of age, and of grief for the total extinction of his illuſtrious family.

THE death of the Cardinal was extremely felt at Avignon, where it left a great void, his houſe being the rendezvous of men of letters and of genius. Thoſe Italians who compoſed his court could not ſupport Avignon after they had loſt their Mæcenas. They diſperſed. Three of theſe were the particular friends of Petrarch; Socrates, Luke Chriſtian, and Mainard Accuiſe. Socrates was extremely embarraſſed by the death of the Cardinal: he felt it was impoſſible to live further from his dear Petrarch, and yet he could not determine to quit France for Italy: he wrote, without ceaſing, the moſt preſſing letters to Petrarch, to return and ſettle in France.

LUKE CHRISTIAN was of a noble family at Rome. He had a benefice at Placentia, and Petrarch had given him the Canonry of Modena. He was a good companion, and had a very cultivated underſtanding. Mainard Accuiſe

was

was deſcended from the great Civilian of Florence, whom they ſtyled the idol of the law. He was Abbe of St. Anthony of Placentia: an illiterate man, but of a moſt amiable, candid, and generous temper, and poſſeſſed of all thoſe kind and gentle qualities which contribute to the comfort of life. He determined with Luke to go to Italy to Petrarch, and ſettle with him the life they ſhould lead, and the place in which they ſhould fix their reſidence. They ſet out from Avignon in March 1349, and arrived at Parma in April; but they did not find their friend, he was gone a little journey to Padua and Verona. Luke and Mainard paſſed a day in his houſe, to reſt themſelves; and when they went away, left a letter in his library, wherein they told him they had taken the rout of the Alps to come and ſee him at Parma; that they were going to make a tour through Italy to ſettle their affairs, and would then return and concert with him 1349.

the means of living together. They begged him not to yield to the ſolicitations of Socrates, who wanted above all things to bring him back to Vaucluſe.

WHEN Petrarch returned to Parma, what was his concern to find the loſs he had ſuſtained! He wrote to his friends, to teſtify his regret:

"YOU appear anxious leſt Socrates ſhould engage me to return to Vaucluſe. Moved by the repeated ſolicitations of this dear friend, it is true I did give him hopes of it, if what I propoſed ſucceeded: that is, had I gained an eſtabliſhment which ſhould furniſh me with a juſt pretext to remain there, and procure me at the ſame time the means of living with my friends, and receiving conveniently all thoſe perſons who are uſed to viſit me. But when I wrote with this view, our maſter was alive. You was at Avignon with Luke, Lelius, and the

ſmall number of friends death had yet left me: theſe were ſo many lovers who drew me thither. Since that time, the face of things has changed: our maſter is dead; you are all diſperſed, and poor Socrates remains alone in that city; he is attached to it by the force of habit. I doubt not, he wiſhes to be with us, and to ſee me above all; but how can he have the courage to propoſe our coming into a country where the bond of union is broken, and we ſhould be as ſtrangers without ſupport, and without habitation? If we were like thoſe happy ſouls diſengaged from the ties of the body, who inhabit the *Elyſian* fields, who require only ſhady woods, beds of graſs, or the banks of a river, and meadows watered by ſtreams; Vaucluſe would furniſh us. But ſomething more is neceſſary for thoſe ſouls who drag their bodies along with them. The vulgar think that poets and philoſophers are made of ſtone: but they deceive themſelves in this, as in many

other

other things; they are really made of fleſh. Vaucluſe would produce to us, as it did formerly, agreeable amuſements when we are fatigued with our reſidence in the city: but it is not the place for a continued ſettlement. It is charming in ſummer; no one has proved this more ſenſibly than myſelf, in a reſidence of ten years. And, not to incur the cenſure of vanity, I will add, it ought not to repent it had me for its gueſt. I have improved it the beſt I could, and it is known to many by my verſes rather than by its own fame. From my tender youth I loved that fountain, and it was afterwards the port in which I took refuge. Alas! I knew not what I did! I brought with me there the cares that conſumed me. I filled thoſe beautiful vallies watered by the Sorgia with my cries and my tears, which reſounded every where. Theſe remembrances endear that ſolitude: but alas! they embitter it too!"

"THE

"The beauties of Vaucluſe I ſtill admire. But can they be paralleled with thoſe pure fountains, thoſe majeſtic rivers, thoſe vaſt lakes filled with fiſh; in fine, with thoſe two ſeas which embrace Italy on every ſide? not to ſpeak of the other advantages of my country; above all, the wit, genius, and manners of its inhabitants. I know all this; and yet my friendſhip for you will not permit me to hide it, I ſigh in renouncing Vaucluſe, and feel myſelf ſtill irreſiſtibly impelled towards it. Our youth is paſſed: illuſions are no longer to be indulged. What hinders us from gliding on the few days that remain in peace and ſtudy? We have loſt the beſt of maſters; and being at liberty, why ſhould we not enjoy it? From the great we may hope good-will, but among them we cannot flatter ourſelves with uniting in true ſociety. Vanity, and that diſparity of fortune which is the bane of friendſhip, prevents it. Fearing always to debaſe themſelves, they

they will be adored rather than loved. Our maſter lived with us as his friends, and his ſervice had nothing humbling or grievous: but we are now entirely free. We are not princes of the earth, or of the ſea, as Ariſtotle ſays: but is this neceſſary to be happy? Have we not as much as thoſe moderate ſpirits need, who regulate their deſires by the wants of nature? Suppoſe we were to join our little fortunes; we ſhould live in abundance, and have much more to fear from envy than poverty. Why do we heſitate to do this? Why are we ſeparated one from the other by rivers, ſeas, and mountains? Why do not perſons ſo ſtrictly united by friendſhip, who have but one heart and one ſoul, live alſo under the ſame roof? For my part, I have long fixed a term to my deſires; and I fear not the reproach of my heir. I live for myſelf, and not for him with whoſe diſpoſition and character I am not yet acquainted. What greater happineſs can

we

we propoſe, than to paſs our life with proved and united friends, with whom we think aloud; and who have but one will, one ſoul? Can any thing be more agreeable than faces always ſerene, minds always agreed, hearts always open; converſations where truth reigns without conſtraint, reſerve, or preparation? This manner of life is the object of all my deſires; if I can obtain it, I ſhall have no cauſe for envy."

"My houſe is not large, but it will accommodate ſuch friends; and if our ſociety ſhould increaſe, I have a larger in the city, to which we may repair. My domeſtic, who appears a world to me who love to be alone, is at preſent the only perſon who reſides there. We have in the neighbourhood Bologna, where in the ſtudy of the law we paſſed the moſt delightful years of youth. With what pleaſure ſhall we reviſit the places we occupied in the days of innocente and illuſion!

illuſion! But I mean not to preſcribe to you. If you like Placentia, where your abbey is ſituated, I will follow you there: or to the Milaneſe, full of lakes and rivers, and ſurrounded by the Alps, which hang over theſe lakes, and are covered with ſnow even in the midſt of ſummer: or to Genoa, where we ſhall have the Appenine over our heads, the ſea at our feet, and the Tritons dancing before us; where our ears will be ſaluted with the voice of Neptune, the ſounds of the Nereides, and the daſhing of the waves againſt the rocks. When we ſhall be weary of this ſpot, Padua preſents a tranquil and charming ſituation. What a felicity will it be to live with James de Corrare, the moſt agreeable of men! Virtue is always amiable: but it is ſtill more ſo in this age. Its rarity augments its value. We ſhall then be near Venice, which appears to me, who have ſeen the fineſt cities in Europe, the wonder of them all. Andrew Dondolo, the preſent

Doge,

Doge, is more illuſtrious for his wiſdom than his birth. Torviſe is near this city; it is a town ſurrounded with rivers and fountains, the centre of joy and pleaſure. They ſay, that ſameneſs is the mother of diſquiet; variety ſhall then be the cure. Let us unite without loſs of time. Come here, if that ſuits you; if not, chooſe a place where we may live and die in tranquillity. I am ready to follow you every where, even to a barbarous clime if you make choice of it: I will renounce my own inclination to adopt yours: I ſhall be at eaſe any where, if I am but in your ſociety."

Petrarch, deſirous of an early anſwer, ſought among his ſervants a meſſenger whom he could beſt ſpare for this journey, and fixed upon his cook; adding the following lines:

"The moſt vulgar peaſant is qualified for my kitchen. I prefer the moſt

ſimple meats prepared without art or labour. I think with Epicurus that no cheer is more delicious than the fruits and herbs of my garden. I always approved a taſte conformable to nature. Not that I diſlike a good repaſt now and then; but it ſhould come very rarely. Among the Romans, before the conqueſt of Aſia, the cook was the vileſt of ſlaves: would to God they had never conquered that part of the world, which has ſubdued them by its ſoftneſs and luxury! Be ſo good to communicate this letter to our friends; and if you find an opportunity, ſend it to Socrates at *Avignon.*"

In *June 1349*, while Petrarch was revolving in his mind the happieſt idea of this future union with his friends, his cook came back in the midſt of a heavy ſtorm. Petrarch, not expecting him ſo ſoon, and knowing by his air that he brought bad news, was ſeized with conſternation. He was writing, and

and the pen fell from his hand. "What is the matter? What news do you bring me?" ſaid he in haſte. "Alas! very bad," replied the ſervant with a voice interrupted by his ſobs. "Your two friends fell into the hands of thieves, on the top of Mount Appennine. O God! what a ſad accident! Mainard, who had ſtopped for ſomething, they ſurrounded and murdered. Luke, hearing his cries, galloped back to him ſword in hand: he alone fought ten of them; but at laſt he received ſo many wounds, that he fell almoſt dead to the earth. The thieves fled with their prey. Some peaſants, drawn thither by the noiſe, would infallibly have taken them, if ſome gentlemen, unworthy to be called ſo, had not ſtopped their purſuit, and admitted the thieves into their caſtles. Luke was ſeen with ſword in hand among the rocks, but no one knows what is become of him." The condition of Petrarch, when he heard theſe dreadful tidings, cannot

be deſcribed: he ſent couriers immediately to Placentia, Florence, and Rome, to ſee if they could hear any thing of Luke.

THESE thieves and banditti were villains and proſcribed perſons from Florence, who had fortified themſelves in remote and inacceſſible places, from whence they iſſued forth and committed the moſt horrid murders. They were backed by the Ubaldini, a very antient and powerful houſe in Tuſcany, who had ſeveral impregnable fortreſſes in the Appennine, near the city of Mugella, of which they were lords. Theſe were the gentlemen unworthy of being called ſo, ſpoken of by Petrarch's cook. They gave an aſylum to theſe banditti in their caſtles, favoured their conduct, and divided with them the ſpoil. Villani, the hiſtorian of this age, from whom this account is taken, adds, that "theſe thieves having learned that Mainard of Florence was returning

returning from Avignon with two thouſand florins of gold, they lay in wait for him, killed and rifled him in the county of Florence." Petrarch thought it his duty to write to thoſe who governed the city of Florence, to engage them to purſue the villains into their entrenchments, and enſure the ſafety of the highways. After a compliment to the republic, he ſays;

"I have juſt received news which is grief to my ſoul. Mainard Accuiſe, one of your beſt citizens, and my dear friend, returning from the court of Avignon, and going to Florence, was aſſaſſinated near the gates of the city, in the boſom of his country, and, ſo to ſpeak, in the face of his friends. This unfortunate man, after having traverſed the earth, and ſuffered much in his youth, was coming to paſs in tranquillity the remains of a laborious and agitated life, and he flattered himſelf with a quiet death

and burial in that land where he received his birth. Barbarous men, or rather ſavage beaſts, have envied him this conſolation. O times! O manners! Who could have believed that this gentle and good man, after having travelled without accident through the midſt of thoſe cruel nations who inhabit the borders of the Rhone, traverſed the deſarts of Provence, the moſt deſolate and depraved country in the world; after paſſing the night among the Alps, where are whole armies of banditti; ſhould be ſacrificed in open day at the very gates of Florence? Gold in antient times, but blood now, is the object of theſe wretches. What elſe could induce them to plunge their ſwords into the breaſt of an innocent man, ſtripped and diſarmed, who could never have revenged their robbery? For what have they to fear in thoſe impregnable fortreſſes which ſerve them for caverns and aſylums, from whence they brave Florence and Heaven itſelf?"

"JUSTICE

"JUSTICE is the baſis of all grandeur and proſperity. Aſſaſſins threaten you to the face, who dared not conceive miſchief in the time of your fathers. If you leave ſuch actions unpuniſhed, there is an end of your glory and of your republic. Its foundation overthrown, it muſt ſink. But I feel that your juſtice will not tarry; it will overtake them. You are diſtreſſed, 'tis true, by theſe banditti: but true virtue comes as pure out of adverſity, as gold out of the crucible; and your courage will increaſe in proportion to your difficulties. But what will relieve my grief? The moſt eloquent words I can uſe, even the lyre of Orpheus itſelf, cannot reſtore to me the friend I have loſt. I do not propoſe it to you to raiſe him from the dead, but to preſerve his honour from burial; and, which is a moſt important object, to free the Appennine from banditti, which is the general road to Rome. Theſe mountains have been always ſteep and rugged, but

formerly they were traverſed with the greateſt ſecurity. But if thoſe that ſhould be the guardians become the robbers, and inſtead of faithful dogs watching from their caſtles to protect, become wolves to deſtroy; terror will ſpread over the mind, the Appennine will become deſert, and more uninhabitable than Atlas or Caucaſus. Illuſtrious citizens! prevent this diſgrace. Thoſe that would pull up a tree begin at the roots; in like manner thoſe who would exterminate thieves muſt ſeek them in their ſecret retreats. Have the goodneſs alſo to ſeek out the other friend of whoſe fate I am uncertain. But I dread the worſt. God maintain the happineſs of your republic."

This letter had the ſucceſs it deſerved. The Florentines ſent an army againſt the Ubaldini, and took in leſs than two months a great many of their caſtles, and made great havock in their eſtates. The body of Mainard was found, and buried with honour;

honour: a poor conſolation for Petrarch! He ſought news of Luke from every one he met with, and trembled at each noiſe around him. He had loſt all hope, when a Milaneſe merchant of his acquaintance called on him, ſaying, "I was told you were here, and would not paſs without paying my reſpects to you." "You are very polite, Sir; may I enquire the road you came?" "From Florence, replied the merchant, I ſet out from thence four days ago." "Good Heaven! ſaid Petrarch, which then was your rout?" "Not the high road, replied the merchant, I was warned againſt that. I took a by-path through the woods. You know without doubt the accident that has happened to a citizen of Florence; the whole city is in arms, to revenge his death. The army is already encamped on the Appennine." "I know it, ſaid Petrarch; but is it true that the perſons who accompanied this Florentine have periſhed with him?" "I only heard

heard ſpeak of one perſon who ſuffered, replied the merchant; had there been ſeveral it would have been mentioned: but I can affirm nothing, as I know only the public report." This revived the hopes of Petrarch. In this uncertain and afflicted ſtate of mind, and continually hearing of and beholding the devaſtations made by the plague, he wrote the following letter to his dear Socrates:

"HAVE any annals ſince the deſtruction of Troy ſhewn ſuch terror and deſolation as we now behold? Lands abandoned, cities depopulated, fields covered with dead bodies; the whole earth almoſt become one vaſt deſert! Aſk the hiſtorians; they ſay nothing. Conſult the phyſicians; they are aſtoniſhed and confounded. Addreſs the philoſophers; they ſhrug up their ſhoulders, knit their brows, and put their finger on their lips. Our ſtreets heaped up with dead bodies, reſemble a charnel-houſe rather than a city: and

and we are amazed when we re-enter our houſes to find any thing remaining that is dear to us. Happy, thrice happy the future age, who will perhaps look upon our calamities as a ſeries of fables! In the moſt bloody war there is ſome reſource; and an honourable death is a great conſolation. But here we have none. And is it then true, as ſome philoſophers have advanced, that God has no concern for what paſſes on the earth? Let us caſt far from us ſo ſenſeleſs an opinion. If he has not, how could the world ſubſiſt? Some philoſophers have *given this* care to nature. Seneca juſtly *views ſuch* as ungrateful men, who would hide under a borrowed name the benefits of the Supreme Cauſe, and by an impious ſubtilty tempt men to deprive him of his juſt homage."

"Yes, great God! thou careſt for us, we cannot doubt it: but how impenetrable are thy judgments! If we are puniſhed

niſhed more than others, we are no doubt more culpable. Perhaps thou wouldſt prove, thou wouldſt purify us, and render us more deſerving of thy benefits; but how little do we know! There may be other cauſes of evil, to which our weak intelligence cannot arrive."

"ALAS! my dear Socrates, we have outlived our friends, and almoſt outlived ourſelves!"

PETRARCH, willing to replace the voids which death had made in his heart, attached himſelf to Paganino Bezzozi, a man of ſenſe and converſation. The circumſtances of the times had contributed to their immediate union. Diſtreſs ſoftens the heart, and ties cloſe the bonds of affection: the more we have loſt, the more we are attached to what remains behind. "Our fortunes became common, ſaid he. After a ſhort trial of his worth, I found he merited my confidence,

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and he proved a ſort of Socrates in the friendſhip he ſhewed me." But death envied Petrarch this conſolation in his misfortunes. Paganino was ſtruck with the plague: but this did not hinder his ſupping with his friends. After ſupper, he diſcourſed with Petrarch as uſual. He ſuffered with amazing fortitude all night the moſt violent pain, and expired before morning.

There remained at this time to Petrarch only three of his old friends; Gui Settimo, Lelius, and Socrates. Settimo was making his court at Avignon. Lelius was retired to Rome, his native city, ſome time before the death of Cardinal Colonna. Petrarch was very uneaſy about Socrates; he had written him ſeveral letters by ſafe hands, but had received no anſwer. He wrote again, with a letter incloſed to his brother Gerard, who had made great progreſs in the ſpiritual life

in the ſeven years he had been among the Carthuſians.

THIS month, September, 1349, there was another ſcourge which oppreſſed mankind. The earth was agitated in a violent manner. Theſe earthquakes in ſome places laſted ſeveral days, and the violence of the ſhocks cauſed great havock in the city of Rome. Petrarch ſpeaks thus of it in a letter:

"I TREMBLE not only for Rome, but for all Italy. My blood freezes when I recall the laſt words of the prophecy of Balaam: 'They ſhall come from Italy in ſhips, they ſhall vanquiſh the Aſſyrians, and ravage the Hebrews.' This prophecy has been accompliſhed in the fall of the Roman empire. God ſend that theſe earthquakes do not foretell the loſs of peace and liberty to our land!"

PETRARCH paid a viſit this year to Gonzagua, lord of Mantua, who had invited him ſo preſſingly to reſide at his court. Lewis de Gonzagua had aſſociated his three ſons in the government with himſelf, and aſſigned them employments ſuited to their genius. Gui, the eldeſt, liberal, magnificent, and a lover of letters, was charged with all that concerns the interior government of the city, and its negociations with ſtrangers. Philipon, active, unquiet, warlike, had the department of war, and was general of the army: he had attended the king of Hungary in his expedition to Naples to revenge his brother's death, and was lately returned from thence. Feltrin, who loved the arts, had the direction of the buildings, fortifications, reparations of the highways, &c. Lewis de Gonzagua ſinking under the weight of years, for he was above fourſcore, had reſigned the government to his children; and they ſhewed in their admirable conduct what may

be accompliſhed in a ſmall ſtate by three brothers firmly united.

Gui, who was the patron of letters, and had long known our poet, gave him a very diſtinguiſhed reception. A diſpatch being ſent to Avignon; in the letters of the Chancellor, who was the negociator, and Petrarch's friend, no mention being made of him, Gui reproached the chancellor, ſaying, "You ſpeak of our affairs, you tell us what paſſes at the Roman court, and you ſay nothing of Petrarch, in whom I am more intereſted than in them all." The Chancellor communicated this ſentiment to Petrarch, who expreſſed his acknowledgment by ſaying, "The power of love extends from pole to pole, and binds men by inviſible ties, however ſituation may ſeparate them; as Auguſtus manifeſted in his affection for Virgil the ſon of a Mantuan labourer, and Horace ſon of a freed man, to whom he wrote with the moſt affec-

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tionate familiarity. If ſuch examples render it leſs ſurpriſing that I ſhould be ſo honoured, I feel not leſs ſenſibly the glory of being treated like theſe great men, when I fall ſo ſhort of their merit. One of them ſaid, 'It is not a little matter to obtain favour of princes'; for my part, I know not how I come to pleaſe others, who could never pleaſe myſelf."

Petrarch was at Mantua. He went to ſee that little village famous for the birth of Virgil: it is only a ſmall league from that city. It was formerly called *Andes*: its preſent name is Pietola. On this ſpot his fancy kindled, and he wrote the following lines to Virgil:

"Great Poet! the honour of Rome, the fruitful hope of the Muſes! Tell me where you are at preſent. In what part of Avernus are you encloſed? Or are you not rather on Parnaſſus, with Apollo and the Nine, who enchant you with their

concerts? Perhaps you are walking in the woods, or in the Elyſian fields, with Homer whom you ſo much reſemble, with Orpheus, and the other poets of the firſt rank: I except Lucan and Lucretius, and all thoſe who like them put an end to their own lives. I would know the life you lead; wherein your dreams differed from truth, and where is the ivory door through which you cauſed Æneas to paſs on his return from hell. I willingly believe that you inhabit that region of heaven allotted to happy ſouls."

"If any mortal ſhade is admitted to your celeſtial manſions, mine ſhall attend you there, and inform you what paſſes in the place dear to you, and the fate of your works. 'Mantua, whoſe glory you are, has been agitated by the troubles of its neighbours. Defended by princes full of valour, ſhe has refuſed to come under a ſtrange yoke, and will only be governed by her children. It is there I write theſe lines,

lines, in a ſolitary place near your tomb. I ſeek with ardor the rocks to which you retired, the meadows where you walked on the banks of the Mincio, the trees under which you ſought a cooling ſhade, the woods which were your aſylum againſt the heat, and the green banks where you were ſeated at the foot of your river. All theſe things retrace your image. The unfortunate city of Naples, honoured with your aſhes, groans for the loſs of king Robert. In one day it was deprived of the felicity of years. Enquire not the fate of Rome; alas! it is better to be ignorant of it. Learn rather the ſucceſs of your productions: old Tityrus charms every one with the ſoft ſounds of his pipe: nothing can be more beautiful than the cultivated fields of your Georgics: your Æneid is known through the world, it is ſung, it is delighted in every where: how much are we obliged to Auguſtus, who ſaved it from thoſe flames to which you had condemned it!"

"ADIEU! You will be always dear to me. Preſent my ſalutations to Homer and Heſiod."

THERE was a great friendſhip between Gui and Petrarch. The former loved reading, and this confirmed the bond between them. He aſked Petrarch one day for a foreign book in the vulgar tongue; he ſent him the romance of the Roſe, with theſe lines:

"I SEND you a little book that France praiſes to the ſkies; and ranks with the firſt writings. It proves, in my opinion, how much Italy ſurpaſſes all other nations in eloquence, except the Greeks."

"A FRENCHMAN relates his dreams; his deſign is to explain the power of love, the force of jealouſy, the tricks of an old woman, and the ſtratagems of a lover: he ſhews the evils which love draws after it, the contrary feelings it meets

meets with in its progreſs; labour and repoſe, grief and joy, groans and laughter; and he proves that pleaſures are rare and mixed with tears. The author may well ſay he dreams; one ſhould never ſuppoſe him awake. How much more pathetic are the epiſode of Dido, and the lines of Catullus, Horace and Ovid, without ſpeaking of other ancient and modern authors who have deſcribed this paſſion. I ſend it however becauſe I have nothing better, unleſs all France and even Paris its capital are in an error. This poem was begun in the thirteenth century by *William* de Lorris, who died before he had finiſhed it. John de Meun forty years after continued and completed it: it is full of ſatire on all conditions, of digreſſions and epiſodes, and the women in it are painted in the blackeſt colours.

From Mantua Petrarch went to Verona, and from thence to Padua, where James de Corrare gave him a canonry,

which he held with his arch-deaconry and canonry of Parma. There came to Padua during his ſtay there cardinal Gui of Bologna, the Pope's legate; he came from Hungary whither the Pope had ſent him. The object of this embaſſy was the troubles of Naples occaſioned by the tragic death of prince Andrew. Petrarch was much favoured by this cardinal. Gui of Bologna was ſon of Robert the ſeventh, count of Auvergne, and of Mary of Flanders; to this exalted birth he joined wit and talents, and had ſtudied at Paris with ſucceſs. The archbiſhoprick of Lyons was given to him when he was only twenty years of age. Two years after Clement VI. who made him cardinal at the ſolicitation of Philip de Valois, wrote theſe lines to that prince: "The ſubject you have recommended to me has a cultivated mind, his character is amiable, his manners honeſt, his life decent; in ſpiritual things he is enlightened and full of zeal; in temporal, wiſe

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and circumſpect." Notwithſtanding his youth the Pope confided to him ſeveral important affairs, in the diſcharge of which he anſwered the idea that had been conceived of him, which induced him to ſend him into Hungary on this difficult negociation. The king of Hungary, as we have ſeen, went to Naples with an army, to revenge his brother's death, and to ſeize his kingdom, which he pretended belonged to him: he took with him duke Warner, a chief who was the ſcourge of Italy, and who ſoon cauſed that kingdom to float in ſeas of blood. The king of Hungary conquered, and queen Joan fled into Provence from his fury. The princes of the blood went to Aveiſe, to acknowledge and pay homage to the king, who was their couſin. He received them very well: after which, he ordered Charles Duras to conduct him to the place where his brother had been ſtrangled, and there in his preſence he had this prince aſſaſſinated, after re-

proaching him with having contributed to his death. The other princes of the blood he put in irons, and ſent them into Hungary. After this expedition, the King ſent ambaſſadors to the Pope to juſtify his conduct, to ſolicit the inveſtiture of the kingdom of Naples, and the puniſhment of queen Joan; and he complained bitterly of the Cardinal de Taillerand, whom he accuſed of having imbrued his hands in the murder of his brother. Soon after this, the plague obliged him to quit Naples, and return into Hungary.

The negociation of this affair was very delicate. Gui of Bologna was related to the king of Hungary, and had an inſinuating diſpoſition that the Pope thought well ſuited to it. He was to propoſe peace between the king of Hungary and the queen of Naples, to ſolicit the freedom of the princes of the blood, to deſire the account of the proceeding, that he might judge

judge of queen Joan's conduct, to juſtify Cardinal Taillerand, and laſtly, to engage the emperor Charles to ſupport this negociation with his ſon-in-law. The Cardinal Legate, notwithſtanding his talents, could do no more than obtain a truce: he was ordered on his return from Italy to go to Rome to the jubilee, and uſe his endeavours to procure peace. His legateſhip extended over all that part of Italy between the Alps and the Appennine. He arrived at Padua in February 1350, and was received with extraordinary honours. James de Corrare gave up his palace to him, and defrayed his expences, with all thoſe of his train, which amounted to three hundred. He ſtopped ſome days in this city to remove the body of St. Anthony, which they drew out of the tomb to place it in a church he had built and dedicated to this ſaint. The Cardinal had experienced his protection in a violent diſeaſe, and to ſhew his acknowledgment, would be preſent 1350.

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and aſſiſt at this ceremony. He was glad to find Petrarch at Padua, whom he had known at Avignon, and took every opportunity of converſing with him. In one of theſe meetings he ſhewed him a letter he had juſt received from a prelate in France attached to him, and who was alſo the friend of Petrarch. This was Philip de Vitri, celebrated for his French and Latin works, and his excellence in church-muſic. He was Chaplain to the Pope, and the Cardinal of Bologna, and Archdeacon of Brie in the church of Soiſſons. He had applied himſelf when young to poetry and muſic, which contributed not a little to unite him with Petrarch. Philip de Vitri was of the opinion which the French, particularly the Pariſians, were reproached with. He looked upon every journey out of France as an exile. He wrote in this manner to the Cardinal, lamenting his reſidence in Hungary and Italy. The Cardinal did not reflect upon the conſequences, when he

he gave this letter to Petrarch. To call a journey to Italy an exile, was like blaſphemy in the eyes of our poet. He took pen in hand immediately, and wrote to Vitri as follows:

"Why ſhould not I dare to tell my dear Philip at a diſtance, what I ſhould certainly ſay was he preſent? Nothing is ſo free as friendſhip. 'I do not love my friend, ſays Seneca, if I fear to offend him.' My dear friend, I do not know you again. I know that what riſes muſt ſink; that all that are born grow old: but *I thought* minds exempted from the fate of *terreſtrial bodies*, becauſe being formed of an ethereal *ſubſtance*, they riſe by their own ſtrength, or to ſpeak better, on the wings of nature. If the mind grows old, it may then die: old age may be the end of being, and the deſcent of it to the grave.' Alas! if we are thus deprived of the ſweet conſolation that this noble part of us will live for ever, what

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ſhall conſole us when we become the ſubjects of death! You will gueſs what this long preamble leads to. We have here our illuſtrious father and common maſter, Cardinal Gui of Bologna, Legate of the holy See. You bluſh, I ſee it; your conſcience is not without remorſe. Confeſs that you did not think I ſhould ſee the letter you wrote: if you had, you would not have ſpoken in a ſtyle ſo weak and unjuſt; you would at leaſt have reſpected the Muſes who live with me, and whoſe indignation you would have felt had the time permitted. What is become of that admirable ardor, that deſire of all knowledge which formerly diſtinguiſhed you? You would then if poſſible have drawn off from nature the veil that covers her. What attempts did you not make toward diſcoveries in the Northern and Eaſtern ocean! The earth itſelf was then too ſmall for your curioſity. You raiſed your deſires even to heaven. The oblique path of the ſun, the

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fixed and wandering ſtars, nothing eſcaped your indefatigable reſearches; not even the antipodes of heaven, if antipodes of heaven there be."

"Is it poſſible that a man ſo eager after knowledge of all kinds, ſhould give the name of exile to a journey into Italy, out of which all would be baniſhment indeed, if the whole world was not the country of every thinking man? Shall I be frank with you? The little bridge of Paris has made too ſtrong an impreſſion on you; and your ears are too much delighted with the murmurs of the Seine, which runs under its arches. You have, no doubt, forgot the anſwer of the man, who being aſked from whence he came, 'I am a Coſmopolite,' replied he. As for you, you are French, no one can deny that, and to ſuch a degree French, that you conſider every journey out of France as a baniſhment, whatever may be the motive of it."

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"I KNOW that we all have an innate love for our country, and that the greateſt men have been ſenſible to its attractions, but I know alſo, that it is only little minds that cannot ſhake off theſe fetters. How many heroes and philoſophers have paſſed their whole lives in travelling! Plato quitted Athens where he was adored as a God, to travel over Egypt and Italy. The journies of Democritus are celebrated, and ſtill more ſo thoſe of Pythagoras, who never returned home; more inflamed by the love of truth than the love of his country, after going over Egypt, Perſia, and many barbarous countries, he was twenty years in Italy; and you weep for one only that your maſter paſſes there. Awake, my dear friend, ſhake off the lethargy you are in. Elevate your ſoul, which is ſunk under popular prejudices, and which, tied down to the glebe of its native field, ſees nothing beautiful, nothing rare beyond Paris. Give me back that ancient Philip, in whoſe converſation

verſation I found ſo many charms. It is not to him I write, it is to one of his enemies; ſo he muſt not be offended if he finds in this letter, remonſtrances too ſtrong for the ſoftneſs and luxury of our age."

"But I will return to our Exile. I wiſh you ſaw him in his preſent brilliant ſituation, ſurrounded by a concourſe of people, and even princes applauding and calling him the reſtorer of peace. This is the ſtate of your baniſhed man. I know you love him with all your heart: ceaſe then to lament his fate; rather lament your own as exiled and unhappy, that you cannot behold his glory. He is in the flower of his age, his body ſtrong, his mind eager after knowledge. It is experience, as artiſts know, that forms great men. What can thoſe learn who never go beyond their paternal eſtate? Homer, deſiring to give the Greeks a model of wiſdom, preſents them with a

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man who had viſited ſeveral cities, and ſtudied many nations: and Virgil imitated him in the Æneid; and muſt not our maſter then delight in the lofty mountains which are the barriers of Italy; the magnificent cities it contains, and the beautiful rivers that water it. Our prelate to day aſſiſted in removing the body of St. Anthony; I admired the dignity and grace with which he performed his office: to morrow he continues his rout, and after croſſing the king of rivers will ſee Ravenna the moſt ancient city in Italy, and proceed to the capital of the world. As for you, my dear Philip, when you go from St. Germain on the mountain to St. Genivieve in the valley, you think you have been through the wide world; happy in your manner of thinking, if true happineſs can conſiſt with error: but in your letter you did not follow your own judgment but the judgment of the vulgar, which is always mean and ignorant. Adieu! take care of yourſelf, and do not

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forget me. Mark, the phyſician and the countryman of Virgil ſalutes you."

Padua, February 14.

PETRARCH went from Padua to Verona to ſee his ſon and his friends, from whence he wrote to Socrates, and beſought him to come to him in Italy, and ſettle there, in any part of it he ſhould make choice of; but he could not perſuade him to leave Avignon. The few friends he had left were ſeparated from him by neceſſity. Barbatus was eſtabliſhed at Sulmone with his wife, and could not leave her. Lelius and Settimo were both ſettled at Rome and Avignon. He had lately cultivated a friendſhip with two Florentines, Francis Rinnuci and John Boccace, of whom we ſhall ſoon have occaſion to ſpeak; who were both ſo attached to the place of their nativity, that nothing could draw them from thence.

PETRARCH returned ſoon after to Padua, to wait the arrival of the Cardinal of Bologna, who came there on his way home. After having diſtributed ſpiritual and temporal benefits with the greateſt beneficence, he took the rout of Milan and Genoa to return to Avignon: and he had in his train a vaſt number of diſtinguiſhed perſons from every ſtate in Italy, and received the greateſt honours wherever he paſſed.

PETRARCH, who was not a courtier, accompanied this prelate from attachment, and as an acknowledgment of the kindneſs he had ſhewn him. The Cardinal delighted in his converſation, and bantered him ſometimes on his enthuſiaſm for his country. When they came into the territory of Verona, near the lake of Garda, ſtruck with the beauty of the ſpot, they aſcended a little hill, and ſtopped to view the fine objects around them: the Alps covered with ſnow, though

though in the month of June; the lake of Garda, ſubject to the ebbing and flowing of the tide, as the ſea; on every ſide, rich hills and fertile vallies. "It muſt be owned, ſaid the Legate, addreſſing himſelf to Petrarch, that your country is finer and richer than ours!" At theſe words, the face of Petrarch brightened with joy! "But you muſt agree alſo, added the Cardinal, to moderate perhaps the violence of his effuſion, that ours is more tranquil." "That is true, replied Petrarch, with that liberty which he always profeſſed, but we can obtain that tranquillity you enjoy when we pleaſe, whereas it does not depend on you to procure thoſe beauties of which nature has been prodigal to us." The Cardinal ſmiled, and continued his rout. Petrarch took leave of him here, and returned to Parma. At Mantua, which he paſſed through, he wrote another letter to his dear Socrates, to recommend to him a young Abbe whom he became acquainted

with among the attendants of the Cardinal of Bologna. He deſcribes him as a young man of rare merit, whoſe friendſhip was a treaſure he wiſhed him to partake of.

"Joys of this kind, ſays he, ought to be common between friends. Go and ſee him; you will inſtantly feel, it is that Socrates of whom I have often ſpoke to you. You will be charmed with the ſociety of ſuch a man, whoſe equal I have rarely found. I feel what may be the conſequence of uniting two perſons, who in tracing one another's virtues, will eaſily loſe ſight of mine: but I ſhall conſole myſelf in the perſuaſion, that what I loſe in merit I ſhall gain in friendſhip."

After having finiſhed this letter, Petrarch ſet out from Mantua in the evening to ſleep at Luzora, five leagues from the Po. The Gonzaguas were lords of this city; they had ſent a courier to Mantua,

Mantua, to desire he would honour them at supper. It was with difficulty he got thither. The South wind, which blew, had melted the snows; the Po had overflowed the country round, and filled the roads with a quaggy mud, in which the horses sunk at every step.

He got there late. They gave him a magnificent reception; rare meats, foreign wines, delicate cheer, welcome countenances, and much gaiety. A little matter will spoil a fine feast, and lose the fruits of a great expence. The supper was served in a damp hall, which flies and all sorts of insects had taken possession of; and to compleat the distress, an army of frogs, who had been attracted by the good odour of the meats, came forth and stunned the company with their importunate croakings; they could not sit in the room, and were obliged to leave the table before supper was ended. Petrarch retired to his chamber at mid-

night, very much fatigued: but a courier paſſing to Rome, he wrote a letter to Lelius, in which was this account of the ſupper. The next day he went to Parma. He waited till the great heats were over, to go to the jubilee held this year at Rome. He wrote to his friend William de Paſtrengo, to take this journey with him. This friend wiſhed for nothing ſo much as the ſociety of Petrarch on this occaſion; but he was eſtabliſhed at Verona, and he had a wife and children. All his family oppoſed this journey, and he could not overcome their fears. Inſtead therefore of William, Petrarch took with him an old Abbe of reſpectable character and dignity, and ſome perſons whoſe experience might ſave him much trouble. They took their rout through Tuſcany, and ſtopped at Florence. What impreſſions agitated the mind of Petrarch, to behold his native city, which he had left ſo young that he had retained only a confuſed idea

of it! They had not yet reſtored him his eſtate, for the Guelph party ſtill governed there. He found however ſeveral friends, who though not of long ſtanding, had made great progreſs in his heart, that had ſuffered many voids from death which he wiſhed to fill up.

THE firſt of theſe was Zanobi de Strata, born at Florence, where John his father had taught grammar all his life with ſucceſs. Zanobi continued, and ſurpaſſed him in that profeſſion. His talents for eloquence and poetry united him with the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſons for rank and wit in Tuſcany.

FRANCIS RINUCCI was of a good houſe in Florence; his anceſtors had been the firſt magiſtrates in that city. Francis had embraced the eccleſiaſtical ſtate: he was firſt notary, judge, and ſecretary of the Biſhop, and afterwards ſupreme vicar: and he was prior and

preacher of the church of the holy Apoſtles, which had been formerly the collegiate church. It appears that he was a wiſe and pious man, and much eſteemed at Florence. Petrarch gave him the name of Simonides.

JOHN DE CERTALDO, or John Boccace, whoſe family was of Certaldo, a village twenty miles from Florence, was born at Paris. His mother was a young woman, with whom his father was ſecretly connected. He ſtudied grammar under John de Strata, and the canon law under Cino de Piſtoye. The taſte which nature had given him for poetry and the belles lettres, defeated the projects of his father, who deſigned him for a civilian. It is believed however he was made Doctor of Laws; after which, he certainly went for a time into the church. His father ſent him on ſome buſineſs to Naples, where king Robert, who ſoon diſcovered his talents, received him with kindneſs,

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and loved to diſcourſe with him. That prince had a daughter, the fruit of the only weakneſs that his character is reproached with: ſhe was called Mary of Arragon by the hiſtorians. Boccace fell in love with her, and has celebrated her in his works. During his ſituation at Naples he heard Petrarch ſpoken of in ſuch a manner, that it inſpired him with a great deſire to ſee him: he took the firſt occaſion to form this union, and it laſted till death. They had each the ſame taſtes and the ſame averſions, the ſame ardent deſire of knowledge, frankneſs, truth of mind, and tenderneſs of heart; there was a ſimilarity alſo in their love. We have ſeen that Petrarch became enchanted with Laura, in the church of St. Claire, in the holy week. Boccace alſo ſaw and loved Mary for the firſt time in the church of the Cordeliers at Naples. On Eaſter-day theſe friends conſoled Petrarch for his paſt loſſes.

About

ABOUT the middle of October 1350, Petrarch left Florence, and ſet out for Rome. He gives this account of his journey in a letter to Boccace. "The 15th of October we ſet out from Bolſena, a ſmall town in Tuſcany. Taken up with the thoughts of ſeeing Rome once more, I reflected upon the change that is made in our thoughts in a courſe of years. This, ſaid I to myſelf, is my fifth journey to Rome; it was fourteen years ago I ſaw it for the firſt time, drawn by curioſity to behold its wonders. Some years after, a premature deſire of the laurel brought me there a ſecond time. The third and fourth journey was to render ſervice and ſhew affection to my friends. This ought to be the happieſt of all, ſince its only object is my eternal ſalvation. While I was full of theſe thoughts, the horſe of the old Abbe, which was on my left ſide, going to kick at mine, ſtruck my leg juſt under the knee; the ſtroke was ſo violent that it

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ſounded like bones ſnapping aſunder, and drew all our party round me. I felt extreme pain; but not daring to ſtop in ſo ſolitary a place, I made a virtue of neceſſity, got late to Viterbo, and was dragged to Rome by the aid of my friends. As ſoon as I got there I ſent for the phyſicians, who having examined my wound, found the bone laid open, and the iron of the horſe's ſhoe had left a mark on it. The ſmell of this neglected wound was ſo ſtrong that I could ſcarcely bear it, though our familiarity with and affection for ourſelves renders many things ſupportable we could not bear in others. How vile and abject is man, ſaid I, if he does not compenſate for the weakneſs of his body by the ſtrength of his mind? The days I was obliged to paſs wholly in bed, appeared longer here than elſewhere. I conſider this accident as a juſt puniſhment from heaven, who after having fixed my unſteady ſoul, thought it proper thus to afflict my unworthy body.

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My confeſſor had treated me with too much lenity; I ſtood in need of this mortification. If my accident affects you, the courage with which I ſupport it ſhall be your conſolation."

PETRARCH ſays, he was in the happieſt diſpoſition for this ſacred bath in which the ſoul was to be cleanſed from all its ſtains. We have ſeen that Pope Clement altered this jubilee from a hundred to fifty years, and in a clauſe of this bull, (as ſome aver) he ſpeaks as follows; "The ſovereign Pontiff, in virtue of the authority he holds from the Apoſtles, renews the ſouls of thoſe who receive this indulgence to the ſame ſtate they were in after baptiſm; and he orders the angels to introduce them immediately to paradiſe, without obliging them on their way thither to paſs through purgatory."

THE cuſtom of viſiting Rome to receive a plenary abſolution of all ſins, was begun

begun in 1300, from a rumour that this had been practiſed before; it was not however to be found in the ancient records; but an old man, aged 107, being queſtioned about it, ſaid, he remembred that in the year 1200 his father, who was a labourer, went to Rome to gain this indulgence. It was accordingly confirmed by the bull of Pope Boniface, and Clement gave it the name of the jubilee, becauſe it reſembled the feſtival of the Jews celebrated every fifty years, at which ſlaves are ſet free, debts forgiven, and each perſon obtained the wealth and honour of their family.

THE concourſe of pilgrims at this Jubilee was prodigious; they were reckoned near a million. The ſtreets were ſo full that men were carried along by the crowd, whether on horſeback or on foot. There was no appearance that the plague had depopulated the world. The people of quality came the laſt to it, and above all,

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the ladies of the grandees from beyond the mountains; moſt of them took the rout of Areona, and Bernardin de Polenta, lord of Ravenna, whoſe caſtle was on this road joined, and made great confuſion among them. This would not have befallen them, ſays a contemporary hiſtorian, if they had remained in their houſes; becauſe a ſhip which is always in port cannot be ſhipwrecked. Indulgencies and journies, he adds, are not fit for young people. Strangers who come from all countries, knowing only their own language, were embarraſſed about confeſſion. They therefore made uſe of interpreters, who often publiſhed what they heard, and it became neceſſary to buy their ſilence at a dear rate. To remedy this abuſe, they eſtabliſhed penitentiaries at Rome who underſtood all the languages. The kings of Caſtile, Arragon, Portugal and Cyprus, would fain have obtained indulgence without going to Rome. They wrote to the Pope to beg he would diſpenſe with this

this journey, but the cardinals oppoſing, he wrote this anſwer to theſe princes. "My brethren, the cardinals, conſidering that this indulgence is granted not only for the ſalvation of ſouls, but for the honour of the ſaints, would not conſent that any ſhould be diſpenſed from this viſitation to their churches." The number of thirty days was fixed for the Romans, fifteen for the Italians, and ten for other ſtrangers. Clement, whoſe goodneſs and courteſy was diſplayed on all occaſions, extended his indulgence to thoſe perſons who had been prevented from, or ſtopped on their journey: on this condition, that they ſhould give to the church the money they would have expended in it. The inhabitants of Rome, ſays Villani, were exorbitant in their impoſitions upon theſe ſtrangers, and uſed ſuch frauds and monopolies, that, joined to the fatigue and heat, cauſed a great mortality. And Meyer, another hiſtorian of that age, aſſures us, that of

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all theſe pilgrims, the tenth part never returned to their habitations.

As ſoon as Petrarch could get out, he viſited all the churches with extreme ardour to gain the jubilee. He ſpeaks of the good effects it had upon his ſoul: "I went with fervor, ſays he, determined to put an end to that ſinful life which has often covered me with ſhame, and I hope nothing can make me change the firm reſolutions I have taken."

THE reſt of his time was much of it ſpent in all probability with his friend Lelius. After having gained the jubilee, he returned immediately to Padua. He took his rout through Tuſcany, and ſtopped at Arezzo, deſirous to ſee the town in which he was born. Aretin ſays, that his townſmen, charmed with the ſight of a man who was ſuch an honour to them, went out to meet him, and paid him the ſame reſpect and obeiſance

they would have done to a king: this was in December 1350. He had the good fortune to find in this town the Inſtitutions of Quintilian, which till then he could never meet with. The manuſcript was mutilated, and in a bad condition: but it was an intereſting diſcovery to him. He wrote ſome lines to Quintilian, to expreſs his joy; in which he tells him plainly, that he was fitter to form great orators, than to be an orator himſelf.

SOME days after this, Petrarch going out of Arezzo to purſue his journey, the principal people of the city who accompanied him, led him to Orto, to ſhew him the houſe in which he was born. "It was a little houſe, ſays Petrarch, as befitted an Exile." They told him that the proprietor would have made ſome alterations in it, which the town had always oppoſed, that the place conſecrated by his birth might remain always in the

ſtate it was in at that time. He relates this to a perſon who had written to know whether Arezzo was really the place of his birth; and adds, "Arezzo has ſhewn more reſpect to a ſtranger, than Florence to a citizen."

PETRARCH ſtopped at Florence, to converſe with his friends; and went from thence to Padua, where he had fixed his reſidence. There was great conſternation, and an univerſal lamentation in this city, which had loſt the beſt of all maſters. James de Corrare had in his houſe a relation, called William, whom he treated with kindneſs, and admitted to his table, though he was unworthy of that favour. The 21ſt of December, after dinner, when this lord was ſeated in his palace, ſurrounded with his friends, ſervants, and guards, William plunged a dagger into his breaſt with ſo much celerity, that no one had time to ward off the ſtroke. Some haſtened to raiſe up

their lord, who was fallen, and who expired in their arms: the reſt pierced the monſter with a thouſand ſtrokes, who had committed this parricide. "At the ſame inſtant, ſays Petrarch, there went out of this world two ſouls of a very different kind, and the routs they took were as oppoſite." The motive of this action is unknown; but ſome think James had forbade him to appear abroad, on account of his bad conduct.

Petrarch wrote on this occaſion, the following letter to Boccace:

"I have learnt by long habit to cope with fortune. I do not oppoſe her ſtrokes by groans and tears, but by a heart hardened to repel them. She perceived me firm and intrepid, and took a lance to pierce me at the time I lay the moſt expoſed by the death of thoſe friends who had formed a rampart around me. By a ſudden, horrible and unworthy death;

ſhe has deprived me of another tender friend, of a man who was my conſolation and glory. He was the moſt like king Robert in his love of letters, and in his favours to thoſe who profeſſed them. He was diſtinguiſhed for a ſingular ſweetneſs of manners; and was the father, rather than lord of his people. I had given myſelf to him. While I live, I ſhall never loſe the remembrance of James de Corrare, and ſhall always ſpeak of him with pleaſure. I would celebrate him to you, and to poſterity; but he is much above my praiſe."

1351. THE death of James de Corrare rendered Padua diſagreeable to Petrarch. The delightful ſituation of Vaucluſe preſented itſelf, and he wiſhed once more to behold it. But he continued the winter at Padua. He ſpent a great deal of his time with Ildebrandin Comti, biſhop of that city; a man of high rank, and great merit. One day, as he was ſup-

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ping at his palace, two Carthuſian monks came there, and were well received by Ildebrandin, who loved their order. He aſked them what brought them to Padua. "We are going, they ſaid, to Treviſe, by the order of our general, to eſtabliſh a monaſtery: the biſhop of that city, and ſome of its pious inhabitants, deſiring to have one of our order." Ildebrandin, after ſeveral more queſtions, turned the converſation inſenſibly upon father Gerard, brother to Petrarch, and aſked them if he appeared contented with his lot. The two monks, who did not know Petrarch, related wonders of his brother.

"THE plague, ſaid they, having got into the monaſtery of Montrieu, the prior, a man of exemplary piety, but ſeized with terror, told his monks that flight was the only part they had to take. Gerard anſwered with courage, 'Go where you pleaſe; as to myſelf, I will remain

in the ſituation in which Heaven has fixed me.' The prior redoubled his inſtances; and to alarm him, ſaid, 'When you are dead, there will be no perſon to bury you.' 'That is the laſt of my cares, ſaid Gerard, and the affair of my ſurvivors rather than mine.' The prior fled to his own country, where death followed and ſtruck him. Gerard remained in his convent, where the plague reſpected and left him only, after having deſtroyed in a few days thirty-four of his brethren who continued with him. Gerard paid them every ſervice, received their laſt ſighs, waſhed their bodies, and buried them when death had taken thoſe deſtined to this office. With only a dog left for his companion, he watched at night to guard the houſe, and took his repoſe in the day. The thieves, with which this country is infeſted, came ſeveral times to pillage this monaſtery, but he found ſome means to get rid of them. When the ſummer was paſſed, he ſent to a neigh-

neighbouring monaſtery of the Carthuſians, to beg they would give him a monk to take care of the houſe; and he went himſelf to the ſuperior monaſtery of the Carthuſians, where he was received with ſingular diſtinction by eighty-three priors, and obtained of them a great favour. They permitted him to chooſe a prior and monks to renew his houſe from the different convents of the order; and he returned triumphant, which he merited by his care, fidelity, and prudence."

While the Carthuſians were relating theſe wonders of father Gerard, the prelate caſt his eyes, filled with tears of joy, from time to time on Petrarch. "I know not, ſays the latter, whether my eyes appeared ſo; but my heart was tenderly moved." The Carthuſians at laſt diſcovered him to be the brother of Gerard, and with a holy effuſion embraced him, ſaying, "Ah! how happy

are you in ſuch a brother." Petrarch could only anſwer with his tears: he was touched with this ſcene beyond expreſſion, as he owns in a letter to his brother, from whence this account is taken.

About this time he made a review of all his manuſcripts. Reflecting on the uncertainty of life, and recalling the loſſes he had ſuſtained in a ſhort time, he thought it neceſſary to arrange his affairs; like thoſe who, on the evening that precedes a long journey, collect together what they will take with them, burn the things that are unneceſſary, and give the reſt to their friends. He found much pleaſure in reviewing his ſentiments in the different periods of his life. When he diſcovered how many things he had begun and left unfiniſhed, he conſidered ſuch undertakings as a great folly in ſo ſhort a life, and he threw into the fire directly a thouſand epiſtles and poems on all ſubjects. "I charged Vulcan, ſays he,

he, with the trouble of collecting them; but ſhall I own my weakneſs? it was not without ſighs." But recollecting that his dear Socrates had begged of him his proſe works, and Barbatus his poetry, he ſaved the reſt. To this we owe the eight books of his familiar ſubjects dedicated to Socrates, and the three books of his Latin verſes dedicated to Barbatus, printed in the edition of Bale in 1581, the moſt complete edition there is of his works. Thoſe he deſtroyed contained probably a thouſand intereſting anecdotes of his life. Petrarch writes thus to Socrates on this ſubject:

"I will not ſay to my readers as did Apuleius, read my works, they will pleaſe you: but you, my dear Socrates, will read them with ardour, and perhaps with pleaſure, becauſe you love me. If my ſtyle ſhould amuſe you, it will be owing to your friendſhip, and not to my wit. A woman need not attend the toilette

toilette whoſe lover is to be judge of her beauty. You know I am not eloquent, nor does the epiſtolary ſtyle admit of it. The letters of Cicero are ſimple, plain, and eaſy: he reſerved for his pleadings the thunders of his eloquence. If you will give me a mark of your friendſhip, keep theſe trifles to yourſelf; the world will not view them with your candour; even you muſt conſider my ſituation. My life is that of a wanderer up and down in the midſt of perils, fixed to no certain ſpot. This manner of life procured me a great number of acquaintance, of real friends perhaps but a few; but of this we cannot eaſily judge. This obliged me to write to people of all countries, and of every age and ſituation, whoſe characters and manners of thinking were quite oppoſite. You will therefore find ſeeming contradictions in theſe letters; for the attention of a writer ought to be fixed on the perſon to whom he writes, on his character and manner of thinking,

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and how he is likely to be affected with the ſubject before him. We muſt not write in the ſame manner to a brave man and a coward; to a young man without experience, and to a man of advanced years who has paſſed through the difficulties of life; to a happy man puffed up with proſperity, and to a wretched one depreſſed by adverſity; to a man of letters, and to a fool. There is an infinite variety among men, and their minds have as little reſemblance as their faces. And were we to write only to one perſon, we muſt even then ſometimes change our ſtyle and manner: a monotony in language will tire at length, as well as an uniformity in our food."

"I HAVE ſuppreſſed in theſe letters thoſe minute details which ſeldom intereſt thoſe who were not concerned in them. But I am not altogether of the opinion of Seneca, who reproaches Cicero for ſuch details, and

who

who ſtuffs his own letters with morals and philoſophy. I have rather followed the latter, and have mixed ſimple narrations with moral reflections, in the manner of Cicero. Give theſe trifles a corner in your cabinet, where they may be ſheltered from thoſe daring critics who, without producing any thing of their own, determine with aſſurance on the works of others."

"I HAVE ſketched out a picture of myſelf, which I deſtine for you. It ſhall be drawn with care: it will not be, as Cicero ſays, the Minerva of Phidias; but when I have finiſhed it, it ſhall not fear the critic. In this review, you will be ſtruck with my weakneſs, and effeminate complaints: you will ſay, I was a man in youth, and a child in mature age. I complained not however, like Cicero, of exile, ſickneſs, a ſum loſt, a payment deferred, or an unjuſt deciſion: but when I loſt my friends

friends all at once, and the world was to me annihilated, there would have been more inſenſibility than ſtrength of mind in being unmoved by ſuch afflictions. At preſent, I experience the change that Seneca tells us always befals the ignorant. Deſpair has given me courage and tranquillity. Henceforth you ſhall behold me act, ſpeak, and write with more vigour. Even a falling world might cruſh, but it would not intimidate me."

"I began this letter with the day, and with the day I will end it. I have prolonged my converſation with you, becauſe it is delightful to me thus to enjoy your preſence, notwithſtanding the ſeas and the mountains that ſeparate us. Could I procure a tranquil and fixed eſtabliſhment, I would undertake ſome conſiderable work, that I might conſecrate it to you. I would fain immortaliſe your name; but you ſtand in no need of my praiſe.

praiſe. Adieu! You are my Idomeneus, my Atticus, my Lucilius!"

PETRARCH lodged when at Padua in the cloiſter of St. Juſtine, cloſe to the church of that monaſtery, which was built on the ruins of the antient temple of Concord. Some workmen employed there, found a ſtone, on which was an inſcription to the memory of Livy. Petrarch, who idolized this hiſtorian, took it into his head to addreſs a letter to him as follows:

"I WISH I had lived in your age, or rather that you had been born in mine. I ſhould have been among thoſe who went to ſeek you at Rome, or even in the Indies, had you dwelt there. I can now only behold you in your books; and in them but in part, from the indolence of our age, who have never taken any pains to collect your works. I cannot reflect on this, without feeling indignation

dignation at my countrymen, who ſeek after nothing but gold, ſilver, and the pleaſures of ſenſe."

"I am under great obligations to you, becauſe you bring me into ſo much good company. When I read your works, I think I live with Brutus, Regulus, Scipio, the Fabricii, the Camilli; and not with the banditti among whom my unfortunate ſtars have placed me. Salute on my part among the antients, Polybius, Quintus, Claudius, Valerius, and Antias whoſe glory was clouded by yours; among the moderns, Pliny the younger your neighbour, and Criſpus Salluſt your rival; and inform them they have not been more fortunate than you, with reſpect to the preſervation of their works."

"I write this in the city where you were born and interred, in the veſtibule of St. Juſtine the virgin, and on the ſtone of your monument."

Padua

PADUA was near Venice, and Petrarch went often to that city, which he called the wonder of all cities. He became acquainted with Andrew Dondolo, who was made Doge in 1343, though he was but thirty-six years of age, which was an extraordinary thing. But he was a young man of great merit, and joined the talents neceſſary for governing with an agreeable figure and very inchanting manners. We have ſeen that he was in the good graces of the beautiful empreſs of Milan. His mind was cultivated and poetical: he had read the works of our poet, and was charmed with his acquaintance, to obtain which, he had made conſiderable advances, which Petrarch anſwered with the higheſt ſentiments of eſteem and admiration.

THE commerce of the Venetians increaſed under the government of Dondolo; they began at that time to trade to Egypt and Syria, from whence they brought

brought ſilk, pearls, aromatic ſpices, and other commodities of the Eaſt. This excited the envy of the Genoeſe, and a rupture enſued. Petrarch in a letter to the Doge of Genoa ſays, "I am troubled at the ſituation of your republic. I know the difference there is between the tumult of arms and the tranquillity of Parnaſſus, and that the lyre of Apollo ill accords with the trumpet of Mars. Hannibal himſelf ſaid, that a certain peace was to be preferred to an expected victory. What diſtreſſes me the moſt is, that it is Italians you oppoſe. Would it not be better to wage war againſt Damaſcus, Suſa, or Memphis? Muſt the deſtruction of the Theban brothers be renewed in Italy."

"With grief I learn your league with the king of Arragon; and will you ſeek the aid of a barbarian to deſtroy your own countrymen! Your enemies, you ſay, have ſet the example; they are then equally culpable. Venice calls to her ſuccour

the tyrants of the weſt; Genoa thoſe of the eaſt! Wretches as we are! we buy venal ſouls to deſtroy our own children! Nature gave us for barriers the Alps and the two ſeas; avarice, envy, and pride have opened theſe barriers to the Cimbres, the Huns, the Teutons, the Gauls and the Spaniards. How often have we recited with tears theſe lines of Virgil: "Strangers poſſeſs theſe cultivated fields! theſe harveſts are the prey of barbarians!" Behold how diſcord has reduced the citizens of this wretched country! Athens and Lacedæmon had a rivalſhip like yours; the latter could have deſtroyed the former, but, Heaven *forbid*, ſay they, that we ſhould put out one of the eyes of Greece. A fine anſwer, worthy of Sparta! In the midſt of theſe agitations, I cannot remain ſilent. While ſome are dragging along great trees to conſtruct veſſels of war, and others are ſharpening their ſwords and their darts; I ſhould think myſelf culpable if I did not take up

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my pen, which is my only weapon. I am conſcious with what circumſpection we ought to ſpeak to our ſuperiors; but the love of one's country is above all: this will plead my cauſe, and perſuade you to pardon my preſumption. I will proſtrate myſelf before the chiefs of both nations, and thus beſeech them;—throw down your arms, give each other the kiſs of peace, unite your hearts and your colours! Then will the Pontus, the Euxine and the ocean be opened to you, and your ſhips will arrive in ſafety at Taprobane, the Fortunate Iſlands, the unknown Thule, and at the Poles! Kings and people ſhall go before you; the Indian, the Engliſh, and the Ethiopean ſhall dread your power. Let peace reign among you, and you will have nothing to fear! Adieu, the greateſt of dukes and the beſt of men!"

Andrew Dondolo in his anſwer ſpeaks thus to Petrarch:

"THE Genoeſe are not our brothers; they have been guilty of a thouſand wrongs to the republic of Venice; they are domeſtic enemies, and worſe they cannot be. They have abuſed our patience, tarniſhed the glory of Italy, and debaſed the diadem of its queen. They have rendered themſelves odious to the whole univerſe. It is not aſtoniſhing they cannot agree with others, ſince they are never in harmony with themſelves. We only undertake this war to procure an honourable peace for our country, which is dearer to us than our lives."

THE Doge was delighted with the eloquence of Petrarch's letter, and the depth of his underſtanding. You are very dear to us, ſaid he, but you will be ſtill more ſo if you will often regale us with ſuch fine productions!

THE ſixth of April this year 1351, three

three years after the death of Laura, Petrarch wrote the following lines:

"Oh Love! Who has not proved
"thy mighty power? Seek in the earth
"for my dear treaſure that is hidden
"there! Seek for that pure and chaſte
"heart which was my ſole delight!
"Tear from the hands of death what he
"has forced from me, and fix once more
"thy precious enſign on her lovely face!
"Rekindle that flame which was my
"guide; that conſtant flame which en-
"lightens me ſtill, though it is extin-
"guiſhed itſelf."

"Never did thirſty ſtag ſeek the cool-
"ing fountain as I ſeek what I have loſt.
"Amiable pilgrim! why did you ſet out
"before me! The empire of death has
"now loſt its hold over me; for ſhe
"who bound me to earth is aſcended to
"heaven! My chains are broken. I am
"free and miſerable!"

In another ſonnet, he ſays, "How bleſt ſhould I have been had I died with Laura!" But he would not have enjoyed one of the greateſt pleaſures he met with in the courſe of his life: his friend Boccace came to him on this day, to inform him he was recalled to his country, and reſtored to the inheritance of his family.

The friends of Petrarch at laſt obtained his cauſe, and ſent Boccace with a letter to him from the ſenate; thus inſcribed, "To the reverend Signior Francis Petrarch, canon of Padua, crowned poet, our very dear countryman, prior of the arts, and Gonfalonier of Juſtice to the people of Florence.

"Illuſtrious branch of our country! Your name has long ſounded in our ears, and touched our hearts. The ſucceſs of your ſtudies, and that admirable art in which you excel, have deco-

rated you with the laurel, and rendered you worthy to ſerve as a model to poſterity. You will find in the hearts of your countrymen, all thoſe ſentiments of eſteem and friendſhip you deſerve: and that there may be nothing in your country to give you pain; of our own liberality, and inſpired by that paternal tenderneſs we have always had for you, we return to you without any exception the lands of your anceſtors, which have been redeemed with the public treaſure. The gift is ſmall in itſelf, and little proportioned to your merit: but it will be enhanced by regard to our laws, our cuſtoms, and the recollection of thoſe who have not been able to obtain it. You may now inhabit, when you pleaſe, the city in which you was born. We flatter ourſelves that, filled with love for your country, you will not go elſewhere to ſeek the applauſe that you merit, and the tranquillity that you deſire."

"We read admirable things of Virgil, and of ſome other authors, whom antiquity, whom even our own age cauſes us to regret. You will not find among us Cæſars, or Mæcenaſes; theſe titles are unknown to us: but you will find countrymen, zealous for your glory, ardent to publiſh your praiſe, and extend your renown; extremely ſenſible of the honour our city obtains from having produced a man who has no parallel. Antiquity cannot boaſt, nor will his equal be found in poſterity."

"We are not ignorant how rare, how ſplendid is the name of a poet. Ennius called poets holy, and they are in ſome ſort inſpired with a divine ſpirit: for which reaſon they were crowned, as were the Cæſars and heroes who triumphed. The latter are immortaliſed by their actions, the former by their works. It is praiſe-worthy, ſays Salluſt, to do well for the republic, and it

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is not leſs ſo by eloquence to promote its glory.' Thus men became illuſtrious both in war and in peace; 'and renown, as Lucan ſays, ſhelters both the one and the other from the outrages of time.' If the ſoul of Virgil, if the eloquent ſpirit of Cicero were again to appear in a bodily form among us, we ſhould not venerate them more than we venerate you. Why are men more ready to praiſe thoſe of whom they only hear, than thoſe who are preſent with them? You excite our admiration, and we will ſing your praiſe. Who would not be aſtoniſhed to find ſo few good writers, and ſtill fewer poets, in that crowd of wits among us, who apply to ſo many different ſtudies? Cicero explains this; 'It is owing, ſays he, to the greatneſs of the object, and the difficulty of ſucceſs.' But you have arrived at it by the ſtrength of your genius, and great application. We have reſolved, after mature deliberation, to advance the honour of our city, in reſtoring the

the ſciences and the arts; perſuaded that they will give to it, as they did to Rome, a ſort of empire over the reſt of Italy."

"WHAT we deſire, what was ſo rare among the antients, you alone can produce. Your country conjures you by all that is moſt ſacred, by all the rights ſhe has over you, to conſecrate to her your time, to preſide over and direct theſe her ſtudies, that they may excel thoſe of others. You ſhall make choice of the authors you will explain, and ſhall act in the manner moſt ſuited to your occupations and your glory. The greateſt things have often ariſen from ſmall beginnings: there are not wanting perſons of merit among us, who under your auſpices will give ſome poetic works to the public. Finiſh with us your Africa, that immortal poem; and bring back to us the Muſes, whom we have ſo long neglected. You have wandered long enough about the world: you know the cities,

cities, and the manners of all nations. It is time for you to ſettle. Return to your country, which calls you with a loud voice after a long abſence; a ſummons which perhaps no one ever received but yourſelf. Magiſtrates and people, great and ſmall, deſire your preſence. Your houſehold gods, your recovered lands, wait for you with impatience. Return to them, return to us. You are dear to us: you will be ſtill dearer, if you comply with our wiſhes. We have many other things to ſay, which we have confided to John Boccace, the meſſenger of theſe diſpatches, to whom we beg you would give the ſame credit that you would do to ourſelves."

Villani relates, that the plague having depopulated the city of Florence, the inhabitants, to draw men thither, and reſtore its flouriſhing ſtate, deliberated about eſtabliſhing an univerſity, where they ſhould teach all the ſciences, and

above

above all, theology, and the civil and canon law. In conſequence of which, they built ſchools, aſſigned public funds for them, and called thither the beſt profeſſors in every branch of ſtudy. The Pope and the Cardinals approved the plan, and granted this univerſity all the privileges of thoſe of Paris, Bologna, &c. The Florentines wiſhed for Petrarch at the head of this eſtabliſhment, to do them honour, and revive the taſte for refined knowledge. And this produced the juſt reſtitution of his lands, and the obliging letter they ſent him. Petrarch's anſwer was as follows:

"I HAVE lived long enough, my dear countrymen. According to the maxim of the wiſe man, We ſhould die when we have nothing left us to deſire. I have never been ambitious of riches or honours; of this my whole life has been a ſufficient proof. My prayers and my wiſhes have all centred in being a good man,

man, and in meriting the approbation of worthy perſons. If I have not accompliſhed the firſt point; your letter, which ſurpriſed and rejoiced me, is a proof I am not far from the laſt."

"As Plutarch ſaid to the emperor Trajan, I rejoice in my own happineſs, and felicitate you on your virtue. It is a prodigy in an age ſo deficient in goodneſs, and aſtoniſhing to find ſo much of that publick (ſo to ſpeak) popular liberty in that vaſt body, of which your republic is compoſed."

"Illustrious and generous men! had I been preſent, could I have deſired more than you have granted to me when I was abſent and aſked nothing? Where is the country which has better treated the beſt of its citizens. Rome recalled from exile Cicero; Rutilius; Metullus; but ſhe had exiled them unjuſtly. She recalled Camillus, but at a time when ſhe could

not do without him. The ſame reaſon engaged Athens to recall Alcibiades. But there is no example of an abſent citizen's being recalled voluntarily, but from the motive of ſervice to their country. Auguſtus reſtored his land to Virgil: but have we ever ſeen a public ſenate reſtore to the ſon an inheritance which (for not being claimed at a certain time) was loſt by his father? With how many flatteries, careſſes, and ſoothing entreaties, have you ſweetened the reſtitution of my land, after having purchaſed it with the money of the public! When I ſee it thus dreſſed out and enriched with the flowers of your eloquence, I envy not the moſt fertile ſpots of Africa or Sicily, or thoſe lands of Campania where Ceres and Bacchus contend for the ſuperiority. More ſenſibly affected with your flattering addreſs than the ſervices you have done or wiſh to do me, nothing is wanting to my happineſs but to deſerve by

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my conduct what I owe to your generoſity."

"It is a great conſolation to find myſelf thus re-eſtabliſhed in my country, where my father, my grandfather, and great-grandfather lived to old age, and diſtinguiſhed themſelves more by their fidelity and their zeal, than by the incenſe of adulation. As to myſelf, who have flown ſo far beyond it on the wings of nature or of fortune, you offer me an aſylum, where after ſo many courſes I may répoſe in tranquillity. It is a precious gift; but what you have added is more precious ſtill, and will be always a ſpur which will excite me to virtue and glory."

"Receive my grateful thanks, ſuch as they are, and impute it to yourſelves that they cannot equal your beneficence. I muſt be much more eloquent than I am, to expreſs an acknowledgment that

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bears any proportion to your benefits. Whatever I can ſay, will be ever unequal to my wiſhes. Overwhelmed with your favours, ſhall I dare to appropriate the anſwer of Auguſtus to the ſenate with tears? Arrived at the completion of my deſires, what can I aſk of the gods, but that your good-will may laſt as long as my life? I recollect that I made this requeſt to thoſe who were at the head of your ſenate when I returned laſt year from Rome."

"JOHN BOCCACE, the meſſenger of your letter and your orders, will acquaint you with my projects on my return; I have confided them to him. I beg you to conſider what he ſhall ſay on my part, as if I ſpoke it myſelf."

"HEAVEN grant that your republic may be always flouriſhing!"

NOTWITHSTANDING this letter, Petrarch

trarch formed the deſign of going to Avignon and Vaucluſe, and gives theſe reaſons for it in a letter to one of his friends:

"What can I alledge as an excuſe for the variation of my ſoul, but that love of ſolitude and repoſe ſo natural to me? Too much known, too much ſought in my own country, praiſed and flattered even to diſguſt, I ſeek a corner where I may live unknown and without glory. Nothing appears to me ſo deſirable as a tranquil and ſolitary life. My deſart of Vaucluſe preſents itſelf with all its charms. Its hills, its fountains, and its woods, ſo favourable to my ſtudies, poſſeſs my ſoul with a ſweet emotion I cannot deſcribe. I am no longer aſtoniſhed that Camillus, that great man whom Rome exiled, ſighed after his country; when I feel that a man born on the banks of the Arno, regrets a ſituation beyond the Alps. Habit is a ſecond nature; and this ſoli-

tude, from the ſtrength of habit, is become as my country. What engages me the moſt, is, that I reckon upon finiſhing there ſome works I have begun: I am deſirous to reviſit my books, to draw them out of the boxes in which they are encloſed, that they may again ſee the light, and behold the face of their maſter. In fine, if I fail in the promiſe I had given my friends at Florence, they ought to pardon me, ſince it is the effect of that variation attached to the human mind, from which no one is exempted, but thoſe perfect men who never loſe ſight of the ſovereign good."

PETRARCH ſet out from Padua the third of May 1351, and brought with him his ſon, whom he had taken from the ſchool of Parma. "I took him with me, ſaid he, that his preſence might animate me to do him every good office. What would have become of this child, if he had had the misfortune to loſe me!"

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He arrived at Vicenza at the ſetting of the ſun. He heſitated whether he ſhould ſtop there, or proceed farther. Some perſons of merit he met with, determined him to ſtay. They entered into converſation, and night came on without Petrarch's perceiving it. "I have often proved, ſays he, that our friends are the greateſt thieves of our time: but ought we to complain of this robbery, or can we make a better uſe of it than to paſs it with them?" The converſation fell upon Cicero. Every one ſpoke as he thought of this great man. Petrarch, having praiſed his genius and eloquence, ſaid ſomething of his fickleneſs of character, and the inconſtancy of his mind. Perceiving his friends aſtoniſhed, he drew from his portmanteau two letters, in one of which he praiſes his genius, in the other criticiſes his character.

Most of the company were convinced of the juſtice of the criticiſm, except one

old man. "Ah! Gentlemen, ſays he, for mercy ſpeak with more reſpect of ſo great a man; ſpare me the grief of hearing any thing ſaid againſt him." When they aſked him if he thought Cicero incapable of erring; he ſhut his eyes, ſhook his head, and again repeated, "What a miſery for me to hear Cicero blaſphemed!" "You conſider him then as a god," ſaid Petrarch. "Yes, replied he without heſitation, he is the god of eloquence." "You are then right, replied Petrarch, if he is a god, he cannot err: but I confeſs, this is the firſt time I ever heard Cicero turned into a deity. After all, ſince he deifies Plato, I do not ſee why you are to blame for doing the ſame by him, if our religion permitted us to multiply gods at our pleaſure." I do but joke, ſaid the old man, I know well that Cicero is a man, but agree with me that his mind is divine." "Very true, ſaid Petrarch, you are now in the right: you ſpeak like Quintilian, who called Cicero a hea-

a heavenly man. It is ſufficient however that he was a man liable to err, and errors you muſt own he committed." At theſe words the old man gnaſhed his teeth, as if they had attacked his honour!

PETRARCH's letters to Cicero united are as follows:

"I HAVE read your works with avidity, which after a long ſearch I found at laſt. You ſay a great deal, complain very much, and often change your manner of thinking. I know already what you taught to others: I know at preſent what you think yourſelf. Wherever you are, liſten to the moſt zealous of your admirers. It is not advice I mean to offer; it is a complaint dictated by ſentiment, and mixed with ſorrow."

"RESTLESS and unhappy old man! What do you mean by ſo many quarrels and contentions? And why do you ſacri-

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fice to theſe, a repoſe ſo much better ſuited to your rank and your age? What falſe idea of glory has precipitated your grey hairs into thoſe wars which ſuit none but young men, and cauſed you to end your life in a manner unworthy of a philoſopher? Forgetting your advice to your brother, and the precepts you gave your diſciples, you are fallen into the very precipice you cautioned them to avoid. I ſpeak not now of Dionyſius, of your brother, of your nephew, or of Dolabella. Sometimes you praiſed them to the ſkies; ſometimes you overwhelmed them with reproaches. I would be ſilent alſo concerning Cæſar, whoſe clemency was a certain port for all thoſe who attacked him; and Pompey, to whom your intimacy gave you a right to ſpeak freely. But why that violence againſt Anthony? Without doubt we muſt attribute it to your zeal for your ſinking country. But what then could be the motive of your ſecret union with

Auguſtus?

Auguſtus? You know what your own Brutus ſaid of you: 'Cicero does not diſlike a maſter, he would only have one that ſuits him.'

"How I lament for you, my dear Cicero! I pity, but I bluſh for your errors! I ſay with Brutus, 'Of what uſe are ſo many talents, and ſo much knowledge? Why does he ſpeak ſo well of virtue, and ſo ſeldom adhere to its laws? Would it not better ſuit a philoſopher like you to renounce the faſces, the honours of a triumph, and thoſe purſuits againſt Cataline which inſpired you with ſo much vanity, to paſs a tranquil old age at your villa, more occupied (as you ſpeak yourſelf) with the future, than with the preſent which will ſwiftly paſs away? Adieu for ever! my dear Cicero. I write from the other ſide the Po, on the borders of the Adige to the right, in the colony of Verona, the 12th of May

1345, from the birth of him with whom you are not acquainted."

ONE of Petrarch's friends begged theſe reflections on Cicero, to examine them at his leiſure, that he might form a clearer judgment of them. Petrarch willingly conſented, ſaying, "I wiſh I may be found to have miſtaken his character."

PETRARCH ſet out the next day for Verona, where he propoſed only a ſhort ſtay: but Azon de Correge, William de Paſtrengo, and ſome other friends, detained him the whole month. "The prayers of my friends, ſays he, are ſo many bonds on my affection. Nothing can be ſweeter than friendſhip. I have only to complain of being loved too much for my repoſe." Before he departed from Verona, he wrote the following letter to Boccace:

"You know, my dear friend, and every

every one knows, that all things conſidered, if I was my own maſter, I ſhould fix my reſidence at Vaucluſe, and paſs the reſt of my days in that obſcure retreat. Though deprived of that agreeable ſuperfluity with which cities abound; it contains liberty, leiſure, repoſe, and ſolitude, four things neceſſary to my happineſs. It has however two great faults; it is too far from Italy, to which I am drawn by nature, and too near that weſtern Babylon which I deteſt like Tartarus. But to paſs over theſe objections, there are things I cannot commit to paper, which will prevent my making a long ſtay at Vaucluſe, unleſs ſomething unforeſeen happens. I cannot tell what; I only know there is nothing but may befall an animal frail and mortal as man is, ſo inſolent even in the depth of miſery."

"My project then is to go and viſit the Roman Pontiff on the borders of the Rhone, whom our anceſtors went to

adore on the banks of the Tiber, and whom our ſucceſſors will perhaps ſeek on the borders of the Tagus. Time changes all things: all things follow its paſſing ſtream."

"But this is the affair of that holy fiſherman, who, acquainted with the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Tagus, choſe the Tiber to affix there his veſſels, and his nets. It is the affair of the pilot, whoſe ſhip is agitated by the tempeſt, and of thoſe who direct its helm. We are only paſſengers who run the ſame hazards with them without being reſponſible for their errors. I will then ſeek him where I may, whom I cannot find where I would; and after having taken a laſt leave of ſome friends who remain to me, I will fly, as Virgil ſays, from barbarous lands and an inhoſpitable ſhore: I will go and ſettle at my fountain, in the midſt of my woods, books and gardens, which have expected me above four years: I will paſs the remainder of the ſummer

ſummer in retirement. If I was to betake myſelf to my ancient wanderings, I ſhould fear for my health from the exceſſive heats, though accuſtomed to ſuffer much from my childhood. The next autumn I hope at leaſt to return to Italy with my books, which will enrich my Italian library. Theſe are my intentions, and I thought it right to inform you of them. Preſent my homage to our ſenate. You know how much I owe it. Say a thouſand things for me to thoſe three dear and virtuous countrymen, whoſe image and converſations I carry every where with me."

In June 1351, Petrarch went through Mantua to Parma; he ſtayed here but a few days, for the friends he had here were dead: from thence he went to Placentia, where finding a conveyance to Avignon, he wrote to Socrates to acquaint him with his approach, and deſire him to be at Vaucluſe to meet him. At mount Genevre,

nevre, one of the Alps, he wrote theſe lines to John de Arezzo: "Padua has taken from me the man who was all my joy and conſolation; I have nothing to inform you of that can make you laugh. I ſeek with ardor for ſomething that may produce that effect on me: it ſhould ſeem that antiquity was more grave and ſerious, our age more gay and comic. Great affairs render men ſerious, it is only trifles that amuſe and make them laugh. I am perſuaded that Caſſius would have laughed often if he had lived among us: and Democritus would have died with laughter could he have compared his own age with ours. We ſee nothing now but mad old men, doting old women, and young ones either fooliſh or extravagant. We ſhould have had a fine tete-a-tete of laughing at them all. My letter, for its narrow ſcrawling figure, perfectly reſembles the ſtrait paſſage of the Alps, from whence I write it. I flatter myſelf that you will ſoon follow me; I would rather have

have had you for the companion of my journey, as I have often had before; but no pleaſure is durable. I ſhall expect you at the fountain of Vaucluſe, a place always agreeable and charming, but in ſummer it is the Elyſian fields. We will breathe a little there, before we proceed to Babylon, that gulph of Tartarus."

From the top of mount Genevre, June.

PETRARCH arrived at Vaucluſe the 27th of June; his firſt care was to notify his arrival to Philip de Cabaſſole, biſhop of Cavaillon: he wrote to him the lines:

"VAUCLUSE is ever to me the moſt agreeable ſituation in the world, and which beſt ſuits my ſtudies. I went thither when a child; I returned again when a youth; and in manhood I paſſed in that retreat ſome of the choiceſt years of my life. I would, if poſſible, live here in old age, and die in your dominions. I

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am ſo impatient to ſee you after ſo long an abſence, that when I have wiped off the duſt of my journey, and bathed myſelf in the water of the Sorgia, I will come immediately to Cavaillon." A ſhort time after his arrival, Petrarch ſays in a letter to Boccace; "I promiſed to return in autumn, but how can we judge at a diſtance? time, place and friendſhip make us change our reſolutions: the gladiator can only determine his fate in the amphitheatre. By what appears I have buſineſs cut out for me during the ſpace of two years in this country: my friends muſt therefore pardon me if I do not keep my word; the inconſtancy of the human mind muſt be my apology." Having paſſed a month at Vaucluſe to refreſh himſelf after his journey, Petrarch went to viſit the Pope and the Cardinals at Avignon.

THE court of Avignon was at this time in its greateſt luſtre. The Viſcounteſs

of Turenne continued to have the ſame aſcendant as ever, diſpoſed of every thing, and lived in the greateſt ſplendor. Eleanor, her younger ſiſter, was juſt married to William Roger, Count of Beaufort, nephew of the Pope, to whom the Viſcounteſs had ſold the Viſcounty of Turenne on this marriage. It was celebrated with a magnificence which anſwered to the quality of the perſons and the taſte of Clement: and the arrival of king John of France increaſed its eclat. This prince had juſt ſucceeded Philip de Valois, and immediately after his conſecration he came to Avignon, to thank the Pope for an eſſential ſervice he had rendered him, and which is a memorable event in the hiſtory of France. Humbert, the Dauphin of Viennois, whom Petrarch had reproached for his effeminacy, was a widower, and had no children. His dominions were very commodious for the king of France, and he had ceded them to him in 1343, and renewed the ceſſion

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to Charles the Dauphin: but always reſtleſs and unquiet, he wanted to break through this treaty, and ſometimes he thought of marrying again. To put this entirely out of his power, and bind him to his contract, the Pope, after having obliged him to take the habit of St. Dominique, conferred on him all the ſacred orders on Chriſtmas-day 1350; the under-deacon at the midnight maſs, the deacon at the maſs ſaid at break of day, and the prieſthood at the third maſs: eight days after, he conſecrated him biſhop and patriarch of Alexandria. By this means, Dauphine was re-united to the crown; and it was an article in the treaty, that the eldeſt ſon of the king, and the preſumptive heir of his crown, ſhould from that time have the title of the Dauphin.

KING JOHN reſided at Villeneuve, which is only ſeparated from Avignon by the Rhone. Continual feaſts were celebrated

brated on this occaſion; and by his orders, a grand tournament, at which, ſays an antient hiſtorian of Tholouſe, all the Roman court were preſent.

King John, to expreſs his gratitude to Clement for this important ſervice, granted to William de Beaufort and his poſterity, the firſt privileges and appeals in the Viſcounty of Turenne; and ſtood god-father to Joan his ſiſter, to whom he aſſigned five hundred livres yearly, a very conſiderable ſum at that time. At this time the Pope made a promotion of the twelve new Cardinals, to fill the places of thoſe who died of the plague. Among theſe the two Cardinals of the crown were, for France, Gille Rigaud, Abbe of St. Dennis, to whom at Paris the Pope ſent the hat by one of his nephews (a favour at that time without example); the other for Spain was Gille Alvari, Archbiſhop of Toledo, who had great concerns afterwards in the affairs of Italy.

The Pope was reproached for admitting many young men into the ſacred college, becauſe related to him, who lived moſt diſſolute lives. Peter Roger, the Pope's nephew, ſeems to be particularly referred to, who was only eighteen years of age when his uncle gave him the hat. But it was univerſally agreed he led a very exemplary life. He became afterwards, under the name of Gregory the XI. one of the greateſt Popes that ever governed the Church, and he re-eſtabliſhed the Holy See at Rome. There were two of theſe Cardinals who eclipſed all the reſt by their birth, their alliances with the greateſt princes of Europe, their credit, their magnificence, the ſplendour of their court, and the ſuperiority of their knowledge. Theſe were Gui of Bologna and Elie de Tailerand: the former we are acquainted with, the latter was of the illuſtrious houſe of Pengord; he had principally applied to the ſtudy of the law, and was eſteemed very ſkilful in it.

Petrarch

Petrarch ſays of him, that he was one of the brighteſt luminaries of the church; he was only thirty years of age when he was made Cardinal. He had great influence in the election of Clement, and no perſon had more credit or authority in the ſacred college. It is more honourable, ſays Petrarch, ſpeaking of him again, to make Popes, than to be a Pope one's ſelf. He was reckoned inſolent and proud; and ſome have accuſed him of cruel and bloody actions.

Petrarch was more attached to the two Cardinals I have mentioned than any others, and wrote a letter to the biſhop of Cavaillon to thank him for his recommendation to them. In it, he ſays, "They are the two ſtrongeſt rowers of the Apoſtolic bark." Three great affairs at this time occupied the court of Rome: the enterpriſe of the lords of Milan, which they meant to ſuppreſs: the war between the kings of Naples and Hungary,

gary, which they desired to end: and the troubles of Rome, which it was necessary to appease. After the fall of Rienzi, the Pope had again established the antient form of government under senators and a legate; when the latter quitted Rome, the same disorders and violences arose as before, which encouraged the remaining partizans of Rienzi. In this situation of affairs, the Pope named four Cardinals to deliberate on the means of reforming this city, and making choice of that government that should best effect it. The Cardinal of Bologna desired Petrarch to give his sentiments of this important affair. After speaking in the highest terms of the sacred respect due to the city of Rome, as the centre of the faith, and the seat of empire, he writes as follows:

"WHAT has been the foundation of all its quarrels and miseries? I wish to Heaven it may not be found, antient pride,

joined

joined to modern tyranny. An effeminate, preſuming, and diſdainful nobility undertakes to abuſe a humbled and unfortunate people. They would bind Romans to their car, and lead them in triumph, as if they were Carthaginians or Cambrians. Did any one ever hear of a triumph over citizens? Is there any law to authoriſe ſuch an attempt?"

"That I may not be ſuſpected of ſpeaking from any ſecret animoſity, I ought to ſay, that of the two families who have been thought to give riſe to this charge, I never hated the one, the other I have loved, reſpected, and ſerved with affection. The family of no prince is ſo dear to me. But Rome, Italy, the liberties of good men, are dearer ſtill: and to ſpeak the truth, it is what I owe to the living as well as to the dead. Behold this great city, deſtined by God to be the head of the church, and of the world,

behold it torn in pieces, not as formerly by its own hands, but by ſtrangers from the Rhine, whoſe tyranny has reduced it to the moſt deplorable ſtate. How are we fallen! Great God! caſt on us, though we deſerve it not, an eye of pity and of mercy! Alas! who would have thought that it ſhould be our miſery to have it debated before the Vicar of Jeſus Chriſt, and before the ſucceſſors of his Apoſtles, whether Roman citizens were to be admitted into the ſenate, when ſtrangers, when new Tarquins diſplay their pride in the capitol? This however is the queſtion which employs the four pillars of the church."

"If I am aſked, I heſitate not to ſay that the Roman ſenate ought to be formed of none but Roman citizens: and that not only ſtrangers, but even the Latins ought to be excluded. Manlius Torquatus ſhould decide this queſtion. When the Latins demanded a conſul and

ſenators

ſenators of their nation; this great man, full of indignation, ſwore that he would never come into the ſenate without a poignard, which he would plunge into the breaſt of the firſt Latin who ſhould dare to appear there. To what was this refuſal owing, but becauſe they would not grant to power or fortune what was only due to ſervice and to merit? But for this, Macedonians and Carthaginians formerly, and all the nations under the ſun at preſent, might pretend to this privilege. But ſome will ſay. We are Roman citizens. Ah! that they would prove themſelves ſo, by being the guardians, and not the oppreſſors of their fellow-citizens. But can they call themſelves ſo, who diſdain the very name of men, and aim at nothing but the pompous titles of lords and princes? Will they build their claim upon their nobility or riches? In what the firſt conſiſts, is a queſtion; if not in virtue, it is a falſe idea. As to the laſt, they have drawn them from the church,

their mother; let them uſe them therefore with moderation, as a fleeting good; but not to contemn the poor, or ruin that dear country from whoſe liberality they hold them. But to govern well, is it neceſſary to be rich? Was Valerius Publicola rich, when he joined Brutus to expel the Tarquins? Was he not buried at the expence of the public, after having vanquiſhed the Tuſcans and the Sabines? Was Menenius Agrippa rich, when by his eloquence he re-united thoſe fomented ſpirits who threatened the republic with a fatal ſchiſm? or Quintus Cincinnatus, when he quitted his little field to head the army and become conſul of Rome? Curius and Fabricius, were they rich, when they fought Pyrrhus and the Samnites? Regulus, when he vanquiſhed the Cathaginians? Appius Claudius, when he governed the republic, though deprived of ſight? I ſhould never finiſh, was I to bring all

the

the examples that Rome furniſhes of a glorious poverty."

"VIRTUE, (I fear not to ſay it) virtue has not a greater enemy than wealth. It was that which conquered Rome, after Rome had conquered the world. Every foreign vice entered into that city, by the ſame door at which poverty went out of it. Shall we ſay that from pride, and not riches, ariſes the deſire of dominion? This alſo was the peſt of antient Rome: but it was then, and will now, I truſt, be ſuppreſſed by your deciſions. In the firſt ages of the republic, the people demanded magiſtrates to defend that liberty which they found was invaded by the great. The nobles oppoſed this with all their might. To this was owing their firſt reteat to the ſacred mount. The rights of the people prevailed over the pride of the nobles, and notwithſtanding their oppoſition, tribunes were created, the firſt public ram-

part

part againſt the violences of the ſenate. After this there was a new diſpute; the nobility would not permit marriages between the Patricians and Plebeians; thus breaking aſunder the ſtrongeſt bond of union between one another, they divided the city into two parties: but the people obtained a law which ſhould render marriages free, without any limitation. However, the former continued only to take from the Patrician families, their firſt magiſtrates. The people ſaw they were mocked, they therefore demanded and obtained theſe offices; a fact ſmall in itſelf, but which Livy thought worthy of recital, as a proof of the pride of the nobles, and the glorious liberty of the people."

"CNEIUS FLAVIUS, the ſon of a ſcribe, a man of low extraction, but ſharp wit and excellent ſpeech, was made Edile. The nobles, enraged at the elevation of ſuch a man, laid down their ornaments of

of dignity. Flavius was not moved by this; he oppoſed the greateſt firmneſs to their pride. One day when he went to ſee his colleague who was ſick, the young Patricians who were there would not deign to riſe and ſalute him: when he perceived this, he ordered his chair of ſtate to be brought, ſat down in it, and looking down on them from this elevated ſeat, he returned them diſdain for diſdain; while they ſat on their ſtools, conſumed with rage and jealouſy. This inſtance, in my eſteem, proved him worthy of being conſul."

"AFTER many and violent conteſts, a Patrician and Plebeian conſul were ſeen ſeated together, and dividing the government of Rome. If theſe things are true and to be found in our beſt hiſtorians; follow the happy example of theſe illuſtrious times, when Rome riſing out of nothing as it were, was elevated almoſt to heaven. It is not to be doubted but that

City

City contains a great number of citizens, ſuperior in birth and merit to thoſe ſtrangers, who on the ſtrength of name alone deſpiſe both heaven and earth. Were they virtuous, I would allow them to be noble; but Rome would never acknowledge them to be Romans: and were they both; they ought not to be preferred to our anceſtors, the founders of this empire. What do the poor people demand? Only that they may not be treated in their own city as exiles, and excluded the public adminiſtration, as if they had the plague. Can any thing be more juſt?"

"ON this occaſion, it may be well to follow the counſel of Ariſtotle, and imitate thoſe who undertake to ſtraighten a crooked tree. Oblige thoſe noble ſtrangers not only to divide with the Romans the ſenatorſhip, and the other charges they have uſurped; but even to give them up, till the republic having taken a con-

trary bend, things ſhall inſenſibly return back to their former equality."

"This is my advice, this is what I ſupplicate you to do, and what Rome, ſinking under her calamities, begs of you with weeping eyes. If you do not endeavour to re-eſtabliſh her liberty, ſhe ſummons you before the awful tribunal of the Sovereign Judge. Jeſus Chriſt, who is in the midſt of you when aſſembled, commands you. St. Peter and St. Paul, who have inſpired the Pope to name you above others, deſire it of you immediately. Liſten to their ſecret petitions, and you will pay no regard to outward ſolicitations. Be only occupied with what will benefit Rome, Italy, the world, and yourſelves. Our ſins have rendered us little worthy of your protection: but the ſeat of the Apoſtles deſerves to be ſheltered from the violence of tyrants; the temples of the ſaints ought to be forced from thoſe robbers who have invaded

vaded them; that holy land ſprinkled with the blood of ſo many martyrs, merits ſurely to be ſaved from the blood of its citizens, which will be inevitably ſpilled, if you do not take ſome methods to ſuppreſs the fury of theſe tyrants."

THIS letter of Petrarch's was addreſſed to the four firſt Cardinals.

THE deciſion in conſequence of this letter of Petrarch's to the four commiſſary Cardinals, is not certain; as the Pope ſoon after this fell ſick. It is probable this affair was not determined. The people of Rome themſelves, wearied out with the anarchy in which they lived, aſſembled together, and elected John Cerroni, inveſting him with an abſolute authority. He was a good citizen, wiſe and prudent, and reſpected for his probity. The nobles did not dare to oppoſe this, and it was confirmed by the Pope's Vicar.

THE

The next affair in debate at Avignon, was the enterprise of John Viscomti, the brother and successor of Luchin. He was archbishop, as well as governor of Milan, and he aimed at being master of all Italy. The Pope on this sent a nuncio, to demand the city of Bologna, which Viscomti had purchased; and to desire that prince to choose whether he would possess the spiritual or the temporal power, for both could not be united. The Archbishop, after hearing the message with respect, said he would answer it the following Sunday at the cathedral. The day came; and after celebrating mass in his pontifical robes, he advanced towards the Legate, requiring him to repeat the orders of the Pope on the choice of the spiritual or the temporal: then taking the cross in one hand, and drawing forth a naked sword with the other, he said, "Behold my spiritual and my temporal: and tell the holy father from me, that with the one I will defend the other."

The Pope, not content with this anſwer, commenced a proceſs againſt him, and ſummoned him to appear in perſon, on pain of excommunication. The Archbiſhop received the brief, and promiſed to obey it. Immediately he ſent to Avignon one of his ſecretaries, ordering him to retain for his uſe all the houſes and ſtables that he could hire at Avignon, with proviſions for the ſubſiſtence of twelve thouſand horſe and ſix thouſand foot. The ſecretary executed his commiſſion ſo well, that the ſtrangers who came to Avignon on buſineſs, could find no place to lodge in. The Pope being informed of this, aſked the ſecretary if the Archbiſhop required ſo many houſes: the latter anſwered, he feared thoſe would not be ſufficient; becauſe his maſter was coming with eighteen thouſand troops, beſides a great number of the inhabitants of Milan, who would accompany him. The Pope, terrified at this account, paid immediately the expence the ſecretary had

had been at, and diſmiſſed him with orders to tell the Archbiſhop that he diſpenſed him from this journey.

THERE is another anecdote related of this prince: and they all ſerve to ſhew his artful character, and with what apparent modeſty and ſubmiſſion he covered his pride and reſolution. The Cardinal de Ceccano, going on his legateſhip to Rome, paſſed by Milan. The Archbiſhop went out to meet him, with ſo numerous and ſplendid a train, and ſo many led horſes richly harneſſed, that in ſurprize he ſaid to him, "Mr. Archbiſhop, why all this pomp?" "It is, replied he, affecting an humble air and a ſoft tone of voice, to convince the holy father that he has under him a little prieſt who can do ſomething."

THERE was an anonymous letter that was alſo attributed to this prince; but it appears more likely to have been written

by Petrarch, from the ſtyle of irony that runs through it. One day, when the Pope was in full conſiſtory, a Cardinal who is not named, let this letter fall in ſo cunning a manner, that it was brought to the Pope, who ordered it to be read in the preſence of all the court. The inſcription was in theſe terms:

"LEVIATHAN, Prince of darkneſs, to Pope Clement his vicar, and to the Cardinals his counſellors and good friends."

AFTER an enumeration of very dreadful crimes which Leviathan aſcribes to this corrupt court, and on which he makes them great compliments, exhorting them to continue in this noble courſe that they may more and more merit his protection; he inveighs againſt the doctrine of the Apoſtles, and turns their plain and ſober life into the higheſt ridicule. "I know, ſays he, that ſo far from imitating, you have their piety and humility

humility in horror and deriſion. I have no reproach to make you on this account, but that your words do not always correſpond with your actions. Correct this fault if you wiſh to be advanced in my kingdom." He concludes thus: "Pride, your ſuperb mother, ſalutes you; with your ſiſters Avarice, Lewdneſs, and the reſt of your family; who make every day new progreſs under your encouragement and protection. Given from our centre of hell, in the preſence of all the devils." The Pope and the Cardinals took little notice of this letter, and continued the ſame courſe of life.

The third affair at the court of Avignon, was the peace between Hungary and Naples. Petrarch was particularly intereſted in this affair, from reſpect to king Robert, regard to queen Joan, and friendſhip for the grand Senechal of that kingdom, who became his ſecond Mæcenas. His name was Nicholas Acciajeoli;

joli; his family was originally of Brixia, and obtained its name from a commerce in nets. It afterwards divided into ſeveral branches, which ſpread abroad to Sicily, England, Hungary, and even to Conſtantinople. One of theſe branches was eſtabliſhed at Florence, and held a diſtinguiſhed rank there, without abandoning the commerce it was engaged in. From this branch deſcended Nicholas Acciajoli. At eighteen he married Margarita Spini, of a rich and illuſtrious family; and three years after, his father ſent him to Naples, where he had eſtabliſhed a branch of his commerce, which ſucceeded ſo well, that he was able, whenever he wanted them, to lend large ſums of money to king Robert. His ſon Nicholas had not his taſte for commerce; he was very handſome, had a fine figure, and an amiable diſpoſition; but his mind was filled with ambition, and his head turned on chivalry. He happened to pleaſe Catharine de Valois, the widow of Philip,

prince

prince of Tarentum, whom they called the empreſs of Conſtantinople; a woman of gallantry, according to Villani, and of very indifferent reputation. She was one of thoſe who contributed to the death of prince Andrew. The handſome Florentine gained ſo much favour with this princeſs, that ſhe confided to him the care of her affairs, the education of her children, and the government of her ſtate. Villani ſays, ſhe made him a rich and powerful chevalier. Lewis de Tarentum, ſon of Catharine, having been ſent on an expedition into Calabria, at the head of five hundred horſe; king Robert gave him Nicholas for governor, with orders to do nothing without conſulting him. The young Florentine executed this commiſſion in a manner that did him great honour, and gained him the good graces of his pupil, who became extremely attached to him.

After the death of king Andrew, he

contributed to the marriage of prince Lewis with queen Joan, who was too fond of her to act with the reſolution neceſſary to accompliſh it himſelf. On the arrival of the king of Hungary, having been prevented following the Queen his wife, he threw himſelf with Nicholas Acciajoli into a ſmall fiſher-boat, in which, with great peril coaſting the ſhore, they got to Ercole, and from thence to Sienna. Nicholas ſet out with the prince for Florence, where his brother was biſhop; but when they entered the confines of the republic, the officers of the government ſtopped them, fearing to offend the king of Hungary, and they retired to an eſtate which belonged to the houſe of Acciajoli. Nicholas got together all the money he could, and they embarked in two Genoeſe galleys with the Biſhop of Florence for Aiques Mortes, where they landed; and proceeded to Villeneuve, a town only ſeparated from Avignon by the Rhone. Nicholas and the

Biſhop went immediately to the Pope, to inform him of the Prince's arrival, and to concert with him the means of delivering the Queen from the caſtle of Aix, where the people kept her as a priſoner. By means of the Pope, and the Duke of Berri, who happened to be at Avignon, and who aſſured the people of Provence ſhe had no deſign againſt them, which was their pretence for detaining her, ſhe obtained her liberty, and was received at Avignon with the uſual honours paid to crowned heads. She made her entry there under a canopy of ſtate, ſurrounded with eighteen cardinals, and ſeveral prelates who went out to meet her. The Pope received her in full conſiſtory, according to the general cuſtom of receiving princes: and the prince of Tarentum, through the intereſt of the Acciajolis, was better treated than he hoped for. The Pope granted him the neceſſary diſpenſations for his marriage, touched

probably with the ſituation of the queen, who was big with child.

DURING theſe things, the King of Hungary had been driven from Naples by the plague; and the Neapolitans, who loved their ſovereign, and deteſted the Hungarians, invited her to return with her huſband. Nicholas Acciajoli was ſent thither, to examine how things were ſituated, and prepare every thing neceſſary for their reception. When he came there, he engaged in the Queen's ſervice that famous duke Warner, who had ſerved the King of Hungary at the head of twelve hundred men, and was not ſatisfied with his former maſter. Finding every thing well-diſpoſed to the Queen, he preſſed her to ſet out immediately for Naples. But money was wanting for this purpoſe; and this determined her to ſell the city of Avignon to the Pope, for fourſcore thouſand florins. This ſum not being ſufficient, ſhe pawned her jewels;

jewels; and having collected a little army in haſte, ſhe embarked at Marſeilles with her huſband, and arrived at Naples in Auguſt, where ſhe was received with tranſport. She loaded all thoſe with benefits who had given her proofs of zeal and fidelity. Nicholas Acciajoli had the office of grand ſenechal, and the adminiſtration of public affairs, as a reward for his great ſervices. There were however many troops in garriſon in ſeveral of the principal towns; and war was carried on between theſe and the Neapolitans, till the King of Hungary coming to Naples in 1350, became again conqueror; and Joan and her husband were obliged to take refuge at Gayette, waiting for the negociations of the Pope to procure peace. At firſt, as we have ſeen, the King of Hungary would not hear of it: but at laſt, whether he was weary of a war at ſuch a diſtance from his kingdom, and which had coſt him ſo much; or whether his reſentment was abated with time; or out of com-

complaiſance for the Pope, whom he regarded; he conſented to a truce, on condition that if after a proceſs the Queen was found guilty, ſhe ſhould be deprived of her kingdom; if innocent, he promiſed to reſtore all the places he poſſeſſed belonging to her, on the payment of three hundred thouſand florins for the expence of the war.

THE proceſs of Joan was not eaſy to determine. There were many depoſitions againſt her, but no witneſſes. At laſt, an expedient was found to finiſh it. Joan proved, by the depoſition of ſeveral perſons, that they had given her a charm which had inſpired her with ſuch an extreme averſion for her huſband, that the perſons attached to her thought it would be ſerving her to put him to death; and that ſhe had thus influenced towards it, without being culpable. On this depoſition, the judges declared her innocent of the witchcraft, and its conſequences.

The

The King of Hungary, quite tired out, 135
agreed to a deciſion worthy of the age in which it was invented. The peace was ſigned at Avignon this year, 1352, by the ambaſſadors of the two powers, and ratified by the Pope. He acknowledged Lewis de Tarentum King of Naples, and gave orders for his coronation, but that he ſhould claim no right, to the crown. This gave the greateſt joy to Nicholas Acciajoli, who might be ſaid to have put the crown of Naples on the head of his pupil, by firſt accompliſhing this marriage, then ſupporting him by his valour and ſkilful management, and protecting and befriending him in his greateſt adverſities. The union of Petrarch with the grand ſenechal, ſeems to have been formed by Boccace, Zanobie, and the prior of the holy Apoſtles, friends to both.

Petrarch wrote a letter to him on this event, as follows:

"Illus-

"ILLUSTRIOUS man! At laſt victory is yours! Thanks to your zeal, your prince ſhall be enthroned, notwithſtanding the efforts of envy. The luſtre of his crown, and the ſerenity of his countenance, are going to diſſipate the clouds with which Italy was covered. After ſo many labours and perils, do not think you may repoſe. What remains for you to do, is far more difficult and more important than what you have done. You muſt collect all the ſtrength of mind you are known to poſſeſs, to govern that kingdom with juſtice which you have acquired with glory. You have ſtruggled with fortune in adverſity, and have been victor; you muſt now combat her in proſperity. She is the ſame enemy; her appearance is only changed; and ſhe is more difficult to ſubdue under the form of an enchantreſs, than any other. She has conquered mighty heroes! Hannibal, who overcame at Cannæ, was enſlaved by pleaſure at Capua,"

"YOUR

"Your prince is young: but his underſtanding is ripe, and he promiſes great things. After having weathered a thouſand tempeſts by ſea and by land, and conducted him over rocks and precipices to the utmoſt point of greatneſs, teach him to preſerve the dignity he has acquired, and prove that the ſceptre hereditary in his family, was due to his virtue more than his birth. It is more honourable to be raiſed, than born to a throne; hazard beſtows the one, but merit obtains the other. Teach him to ſerve his God, to love his country, and to render exact juſtice, without which no kingdom can endure. Let him accuſtom himſelf to deſire nothing but honour, and to fear nothing but ſhame. Let him know that the higher he is elevated, the leſs he can be concealed; that the more power he has, the leſs he ought to allow himſelf; and that a king ſhould be diſtinguiſhed by his manners, more than by his robes. Keep him at a diſtance in general

neral from the extremes either of prodigality or avarice; virtue lies between them both. Nevertheleſs, he ſhould be ſparing of his time, and profuſe of his private money, that it may circulate in his kingdom, and not lie uſeleſs in his treaſury. The maſter of a rich eſtate can never be poor. Let him never forget the ſpeech of that Roman, 'I will not have any gold, but I love to reign over thoſe who have.' Let him not think himſelf happy, or a true king, till he has relieved his kingdom from its calamities, repaired its ruins, extinguiſhed tyranny, and re-eſtabliſhed peace and freedom. Salluſt ſays, that a kingdom ought to be always preſent to the mind of its maſter. The ſureſt guard of kings is not armies and treaſures, but friends: and they are only acquired by beneficence and juſtice. "We muſt deliberate before we chooſe them, ſays Seneca; but when once choſen, place in them an entire confidence."

"It

"It is important, but not eaſy, to diſtinguiſh a true friend from an agreeable enemy: juſt praiſes are ſpurs to virtue, but flatteries are a ſubtle poiſon. We ſhould not break lightly with a friend, nor of a ſudden. According to the old proverb, 'We muſt unrip, not tear away.' It is an error to ſuppoſe we ſhall be loved by thoſe to whom we are not attached, and an injuſtice to exact from them more than we can give. Nothing is freer than the heart: it will bear no yoke, it knows no maſter, but love. Never ſuffer your king to open his ſoul to ſuſpicion, or lend his ear to informers: but let him deſpiſe ſlanderers, and confound them by the virtue of his conduct! Auguſtus wrote thus to Tiberius, 'Let us permit men to ſpeak evil of us; is it not ſufficient that they cannot do it? Does the power of God himſelf ſhelter him from the blaſphemies of the impious?' Let him permit others to ſeek to divine his ſecrets; but never let him

ſeek

ſeek to divine the ſecrets of others. Let him really be what he would appear; then will he have no intereſt to hide, and will no more fear the obſervations of his enemy, than the regards of his friend. Scipio brought into his camp with the ſame confidence the ſpies of the Romans and Carthaginians. Julius Cæſar ſent back Domitius, after taking him priſoner; deſpiſed Labienus the deſerter, though acquainted with his ſecrets; and often burnt the diſpatches of the enemies, without reading them."

"THE title of *Moſt Serene* is given to kings, to teach them that their rank places them above the ſeat of the paſſions, and that they ought to be inacceſſible to all the tempeſts they raiſe. Nothing is more dangerous than a king who deceives; nothing more ridiculous for himſelf, or more fatal to his ſubjects. On his word is eſtabliſhed their hope and tranquillity. Why ſhould he be falſe,

whoſe

whoſe intereſt it is that all under him ſhould be true? Nor let him be ungrateful: for ingratitude deſtroys the very ſinews of a ſtate. He ought to refuſe himſelf to no one. Teach him that he is not born for himſelf, but for the republic; and that he is in his proper employment, when occupied with the affairs of his ſubjects. He muſt work for their happineſs, and watch for their preſervation. There is nothing more glorious: but nothing is more toilſome. It is a delightful and honourable ſervitude. Prompt to recompenſe, ſlow to puniſh, a good king ought to treat criminals as a good ſurgeon treats his patients, with all the care and tenderneſs poſſible, ſhedding tears for the pain he is obliged to give. A king muſt not puniſh a guilty ſubject as he would a proud enemy; but ever have this maxim engraved on his heart. Clemency and virtue aſſimilate to God."

"In fine, a king ought to ſerve as the

model of his ſubjects. By his character they ought to regulate their own. He is reſponſible for all the crimes they commit after his example. Let your prince be irreproachable in his manners. Teach him to deſpiſe luxury, and trample voluptouſneſs under his feet. Let him ſuffer no debauchery in his kingdom, and above all, in his armies. Horſes, books, and arms, theſe ought to be his amuſements; war, peace, and juſtice, his occupations. Let him read the lives of illuſtrious men, that he may form himſelf after them. He ſhould conſider them as his models and guides in the path to glory. Their great actions will warm his ſoul, and ſpur him on to the like. O how glorious is that ambition that ſprings from virtue! You may preſent to your prince a pattern of every virtue, without going far. If love does not blind me, I know no one more perfect than that of his uncle, the divine king Robert; whoſe death has proved, by the calamities

calamities that have followed it, how neceſſary his life was to his people. He was great, wiſe, kind, and magnanimous! In a word, he was the king of kings! His nephew can do nothing better than tread in his ſteps."

"You feel, my lord, the burden with which you are charged; but a great man finds nothing hard or weighty, when he is ſure he is beloved. At the head of your pupil's counſels, the confidant of all his ſecrets; you are as dear to him as Chiron was to Achilles, as Achates to Æneas, and as Lelius to Scipio. Compleat what you have begun: love accompliſhes all things; he who partakes the honour, ſhould participate in the labour. Adieu! You are the glory of our country, and of your own. I have ſaid a great deal; but I have left much more unſaid."

PETRARCH made uſe of the ſame courier to anſwer a letter of Barbatus de Sulmone, who lamented he had not found him at Rome when he went to gain the jubilee, and begged he would ſend him his Africa. "You ſpeak of our not meeting at Rome as a misfortune; I hold it to have been providential. If we had met in that great city, we ſhould have been more occupied with the arts and the ſciences, than with our ſouls; and ſhould have ſought to ornament our underſtandings, rather than to purify our hearts. The ſciences are moſt agreeable food for the mind; but what a void do they leave in the heart, if they are not directed to their true and perfect end. As to my Africa, if it ever ſees the day it ſhall viſit you; but it has languiſhed of late through the negligence of its maſter, and the obſtacles of fortune."

"I AM now freed from many embarraſſments, and my mind approaches rather nearer

nearer that point to which it ought to arrive. I hope, however, to be always making ſome little progreſs, and to be learning ſomething every day, till death cloſes my eyes: at leaſt, as ſaid a wiſe old man, I will ſtrive ſo to do; and what gives me hopes I ſhall ſucceed is, the paſſions that troubled my ſoul have almoſt ceaſed to torment me; and I flatter myſelf in a little time to be wholly exempted from their power. Adieu, my dear Barbartus; if we ſhould not be able to meet in this world, we ſhall ſee one another again in the heavenly Jeruſalem." Avignon, 1352.

THE Pope's ſickneſs detained Petrarch a long time at Avignon, and retarded the deciſion of the greateſt affairs: it began about autumn. A malignant humour broke out in his face, it ſwelled prodigiouſly, and he was judged to be in great danger. In the month of December his condition terribly alarmed thoſe who were

intereſted in him. He was a little better in January, and they profited by this gleam of health to aſſemble the conſiſtories for neceſſary buſineſs; in one of which the affair of Naples was decided: but this was only a falſe hope; and we ſee by a letter of Petrarch to the biſhop of Cavaillon, that he relapſed ſoon after. This prelate went and paſſed five days at Vaucluſe, without acquainting Petrarch, who complains of it in a letter, as follows:

"AND could you paſs five days without me in my Tranſalpine *Helicon*? I was ſo near to you, that had you wanted any thing eaſy to procure, I ſhould have heard if you had called me. Why did you envy me this ſweet conſolation? I ſhould complain bitterly, if you had not compenſated your negligence to me, by your indulgence to my works, with which I find you have paſſed the days and the nights. It is not conceivable that in the

the midſt of ſo many poets, hiſtorians, philoſophers, and ſaints, you ſhould give the preference to my trifles. I owe this to your tender blindneſs for me. My houſe-keeper tells me you had a mind to carry away ſome of my books, and did not dare to do it without my conſent. Ought I not from this to fear ſome coolneſs on your part? Uſe your pleaſure, my dear father! Do not you know that all I have is yours?"

"I CARRIED your letter to Cardinal Taillerand, our maſter. He thanks you, and orders me to tell you he has long determined never to importune the Pope for any advantage to himſelf. He is inacceſſible to all inordinate deſires: it is rather to the turn of his mind than the greatneſs of his fortune, he owes this manner of thinking. You know the public news. The king of Sicily has at laſt obtained the crown he has ſighed for ſo long. God grant that his peace with

the king of Hungary may be laſting. Our Pope came back from death's door, and is returned thither again. He would have been well long ago, if he had not about him a gang of phyſicians, whom I look on as the plagues of the rich. Cardinal of Oſtia is this moment expiring: he has lived long enough, according to nature; but his death is a loſs to the republic."

In the beginning of March, the Pope ſent a young man on ſome buſineſs to Petrarch. After enquiring about the Pope's diſorder, he charged the young man expreſsly to deſire the Pontiff, from him, to take care of the phyſicians, and recollect the epitaph of that Emperor:

"I was killed by the multitude of phyſicians."

The young man, who was extremely ignorant, related what had been told him in a very dark and confuſed manner. The Pope,

Pope, who highly eſteemed the ſentiments of Petrarch, ſent the young man back to him, with an order to write down what was told him. In obedience to this order, Petrarch wrote the following letter:

"Holy father! I ſhudder at the account of your fever! Compare me not, however, to thoſe flatterers whom the ſatiriſt deſcribes, who are drowned in tears if they ſee a friend cry, or who ſweat when he ſays I am hot. I rather reſemble the man of whom Cicero ſpeaks, who trembled for the welfare of Rome becauſe his own was concerned: my health depends upon your's. I will trouble you with few words; conſcious who it is that addreſſes the divine ears of his holy father, and of the ſtate he is in at preſent."

"I tremble to ſee your bed always ſurrounded with phyſicians, who are never

never agreed, becauſe it would be a reproach for the ſecond to think as the firſt, and only repeat what he had ſaid before. 'It is not to be doubted, as Pliny ſays, that, deſiring to raiſe a name by their diſcoveries, they make experiments upon us, and thus barter away our lives.' We ſee in this profeſſion what we ſee in no other. We confide at once in thoſe who call themſelves phyſicians, though there is nothing ſo dangerous as a miſtake in this matter: but a flattering hope hides the danger. And there is no law for the puniſhment of extreme ignorance, no example of revenge. *Phyſicians learn their* trade at our expence; by the means of killing, they become perfect in the art of curing; and they alone are permitted to murder with impunity."

"HOLY father! Conſider as your enemies, the crowd of phyſicians that beſet you. It is in our age we behold verified the prediction of old Cato, who announced

nounced that corruption would be general, when the Greeks ſhould have tranſmitted the ſciences, and above all, the art of phyſic. Whole nations have done without this art, and were perhaps much better, and lived longer than we do. The Roman republic, according to Pliny, was without phyſicians for ſix hundred years, and was never in a more flouriſhing ſtate. But ſince it is now decided that we are neither to live nor die without them; at leaſt make a choice from the multitude, and ſelect not the man who can diſplay the moſt eloquence or knowledge, but who has the moſt attachment towards you. Forgetting their profeſſion, they iſſue from their retreats to make irruptions into the foreſts of poets, and the fields of orators. More occupied with ſhining than with curing, they brawl round a ſick-bed, making a jumble of the thoughts of Cicero, and the aphoriſms of Hippocrates. The ſickneſs increaſes; no matter, if they ſucceed

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in fine ſayings, and can gain a character for eloquence. To avoid the reproaches your phyſicians might caſt on me, I have uttered nothing which is not drawn from Pliny, who has ſaid more of this profeſſion than of any other; and who alſo writes thus, 'A phyſician that has the gift of a fluent ſpeech, becomes the arbiter of our life or death."

"THE intereſt that I take, holy father, in your preſervation, carries me further than I intended. I will add but one word more: look upon that phyſician as an aſſaſſin, who has more prate than experience, more noiſe than wiſdom. Say to him, as the old man in Plautus, "Go about your buſineſs: you was ſent for to cure, and not to harangue." Add to this, a good diet, and above all, a chearful mind which is never diſcouraged. By theſe means, reſtoring yourſelf to health, you will preſerve the welfare of your ſervants,

vants, and of the church, which, while you are ſick, muſt languiſh and decay."

Petrarch paſſed the month of April at Vaucluſe. Every thing, particularly the ſixth of that month, recalled to him the remembrance of Laura.

"When I am ſeated on my green "enamelled bank, when I hear the war- "bling of the birds, the ruſtling of the "leaves, agitated by the zephyr, or the "murmurs of my clear ſtream; I think "I ſee, I hear her, whom earth conceals, "and whom Heaven will bring to light. "From afar ſhe anſwers to my ſighs, "and aſks me with kindneſs, why I ſhed "ſo many tears! 'Ought you to com- "plain? ſays ſhe. My death has ren- "dered me immortal; and my eyes that "appear cloſed, are opened to everlaſting "light!"

"There is no place ſo favourable to "the

" the ſtate of my heart, or where I en-
" joy greater liberty. In theſe delightful
" valleys, there are a thouſand hidden
" retreats formed for tender ſighs; love
" has not in Cytherus, Gnidus, or Pa-
" phos, ſuch delightful aſylums as theſe.
" All the objects around talk to me of
" love! All invite me to love for ever!"

" How often trembling and alone, do
" I ſeek Laura in theſe ſhades! Bleſt
" ſoul! who doſt enlighten my dark and
" gloomy nights; what tranſports do I
" feel, when you thus cheer me by your
" preſence!"

" Oh death! in one ſad moment you
" burſt aſunder the bond that united the
" moſt virtuous ſoul with the moſt per-
" fect form! In one ſad moment you
" deprived me of my all! I am weary
" of every thing around me: but Laura
" pities: ſhe ſometimes comes to my re-
" lief. Ah! could I paint her heavenly
" attractions, could I expreſs the charms

" of her immortal mind, when ſhe deigns
" to re-viſit earth, and conſoles me with
" her divine converſe, I ſhould move to
" compaſſion the flinty heart!

" Zephyrus returns; he brings with
" him the mild ſeaſon, the flowers, herbs,
" and graſs, his dear children. Progne
" warbles, Philomela ſighs, the heavens
" become ſerene, and the valleys ſmile.
" Love re-animates the air, the earth,
" and the ſea: all creatures feel his ſove-
" reign power. But alas! this charming
" ſeaſon can only renew my ſighs! The
" melody of the birds, the ſplendour of
" the flowers, the charms of beauty, are
" in my eyes like the moſt gloomy de-
" ſarts; for Laura is no more!"

While Petrarch was leading this ſolitary life at Vaucluſe, the phyſicians at Avignon, extremely irritated with what he had ſaid of them in the Pope's letter, inveighed furiouſly againſt him. One of them, born in the mountains, and now

grown old and toothleſs, thinking it neceſſary to revenge the cauſe of the faculty, caballed againſt him, and wrote a letter full of the moſt atrocious invectives, in which he threatened he would write Philippics againſt Petrarch, more pointed than thoſe of Cicero or Demoſthenes. "I did not diſcover at firſt, ſays Petrarch, the author of this letter: ſtruck in the dark by Niſus, I feared leſt returning it I might hit Eurialus. At laſt I found out it was the production of a mountaineer."

AT this time there was a report that the Emperor was going to enter Italy. Petrarch, who was always ſolicitous for the glory of his country, and had long wiſhed for this event, wrote the following anſwer to an Abbe in Italy, who had informed him it was a falſe report:

"I AM ſorry to hear it. The journey would have been glorious to Cæſar, and uſeful to the world. But I believe he is con-

contented to live; and has no ambition to reign. If he ſhuts himſelf up in Germany, and abandons Italy, he may be Emperor of the Teutons, but he will never be Emperor of Rome. It is not ſurpriſing that neither letters nor diſcourſes have made any impreſſion on him; when glory, the merit of a good action, and the fineſt occaſion of undertaking it, can have no effect. I ſhould be ſurpriſed and diſtreſſed at this news, if I had not learned by experience, that we ought not to embarraſs ourſelves with the things of this world, and that all done therein reſembles a ſpider's web. For what then ſhould I grieve? I am only a pilgrim, a traveller on earth; for few, or many years, as it ſhall be decreed. When I die, I ſhall go to my own country. Italy will be always where it is, between the Alps and the two ſeas. If an earthly emperor denies it ſuccour, it will meet with aid from the Emperor of heaven!"

ALL the world, and particularly the people of Avignon, were deſirous of ſeeing Petrarch's letters. Thoſe who received them, were ſo delighted with their ſpirit, they could not help ſhewing them to their friends. As there was keen ſatire in many of them, this raiſed him enemies; and they accuſed him of having attacked the authority of the Pope, in his ſolicitude to have the holy See removed to Rome. One of his friends, who had been the innocent cauſe of theſe commotions, ſaid to him, "You are very hardy to attack the phyſicians: do not you then fear the maladies for which they muſt be conſulted?" "I am not immortal, replied Petrarch; but ſhould theſe diſorders attack me, I expect nothing from their ſkill. I do not repent I have wounded them by the truth; if this makes enemies, I ſhall have enough, or I muſt keep ſilence for ever. With reſpect to the holy See, I know that Peter's chair was every where with him, and

that it is at preſent wherever his ſucceſſor is found: though there are places more holy and convenient than others: the maſter of the houſe chuſes that which pleaſes him, and honours that which he prefers; the miſrepreſentations of my cenſurers never entered into my mind. I never preſume to preſcribe the ſeat where the maſter of all places ſhould be fixed. I have not drawn my opinion from the ſlender fountain of the decretals, but from the ſource of St. Jerome; who ſays, if we ſeek for authority, the world is greater than a city. Wherever the *Biſhop* ſhall be, at Rome, Conſtantinople, or Alexandria; it is always the ſame power and the ſame prieſthood. What I ſay, and what I have ſaid, is this: In whatever place the chair of St. Peter is fixed, it is honourable to be ſeated in it." Theſe aſperſions gave riſe to ſome letters of juſtification, which are called the invectives of Petrarch; and to a work ſolicitouſly deſired by the friends

of Petrarch, and much more valuable than the former, which he ſtiled his letter to poſterity, from whence many things in theſe memoirs are taken, and which were neglected by the former biographers of Petrarch.

At this time Cardinal Gui of Bologna loſt his mother, the wife of Robert the ſeventh Count of Auvergne and Bologna. This pious princeſs, after having been at Rome to gain the jubilee, retired into the convent of the Clariſtes, where ſhe had a daughter who was a nun, and ſhe died ſoon after. The Cardinal, who was extremely fond of her, was ſenſibly touched with this loſs, and received a conſolatory letter from Petrarch, who in it mentions the great care of his mother from the beginning of life, and that ſhe had even borne the burthen of this beloved ſon a month longer than uſual.

The Biſhop of Florence, who was then

then at Avignon, and juſt ſetting out for his dioceſe, told Petrarch he would not quit the country, till he had ſeen the marvellous fountain of Vaucluſe. "I ſhall be glad alſo, added he, to behold you in your hermitage, and to judge myſelf of the life you lead there. I am going to viſit the monaſtery of St. Anthony; as I return, you may depend on ſeeing me." Petrarch, who knew this prelate was a man of his word, and expeditious in his operations, made haſte to Vaucluſe to prepare for a perſon of his rank, and collected every delicacy the country afforded. On the day this prelate was expected, every thing was ready. It ſtruck twelve, but no Biſhop appeared. Petrarch, who had been at the expence of a great feaſt, grew very impatient, and in his agitation imagined theſe lines to the prior of the holy Apoſtles:

"THERE is no more faith in the world. We can depend on no one: the

more I ſee, the more I feel this. Even your Biſhop, on whom I thought I might ſafely rely, he deceives me. He promiſed to dine with me to-day. I have done for him what I never did for any one: I have put my houſe into commotion, to treat him well; a conduct quite oppoſite to my character. He fears, no doubt, that he ſhall meet with the repaſt of a poet; and deigns not to viſit the place where the great king Robert, where Cardinals and Princes have been, ſome to ſee the fountain, others, ſhall I have the vanity to ſay it, to viſit me. But if I am unworthy to receive ſuch a gueſt, it ſeems to me he is ſtill more ſo for breaking his word."

While Petrarch was thus ſilently venting his perturbations, he heard a great noiſe; it was the Biſhop, who was juſt arrived. When they were at table, the diſcourſe fell upon Nicholas Acciajoli, the Senechal of Naples. The Biſhop told

told Petrarch he had quarrelled with his beſt friend, John Barrili, one of the greateſt lords in the court of Naples. "I am grieved at this quarrel, ſaid the Biſhop. You are the friend of both, and ſhould make it up between them." Petrarch undertook it; and to bring it to bear, he wrote a letter to both united, which was to be only opened and read by them together: it contained the ſtrongeſt motives for their reconciliation. At the ſame time he wrote one to each of them in private; which was kind, inſinuating, and tending to the ſame end. He concluded by beſeeching them to give one whole day to the reading of that letter addreſſed to both. The grand Seneſchal had wrote to Petrarch that he would raiſe a Parnaſſus to him, between Salernus and Mount Veſuvius. He replied, though he had already two, he would not refuſe that he offered him: "Conſecrated under your auſpices, ſays he, this new Parnaſſus cannot but delight me."

ALL theſe letters, dated the 24th of May 1352, were given to the Biſhop, who took leave of Petrarch, and ſet out for Florence. Some months after, he received anſwers from the grand Seneſchal, which informed him his ſtratagem had ſucceeded beyond what he could have hoped, and that it had brought about a perfect reconciliation.

PETRARCH obtained for his ſon John this year, a Canonry at Verona. He might have procured him elſewhere a more advantageous ſituation; but as this young man was at that critical age when the paſſions begin to unfold, he rather choſe to put him under the care of his two friends, William de Paſtrengo, and Renaud de Villefranche, both ſettled at Verona. He ordered him to ſet out immediately to take poſſeſſion of this benefice, with the letters for his friends, to whom he recommended the young Canon, and beſought them earneſtly to watch

watch over his conduct. To Renaud he committed the improvement of his underſtanding; to William, the forming of his character, and regulation of his manners. This is the picture Petrarch gives of his ſon, in his letter to Renaud:

"You well know the young man I ſend you, unleſs a ſudden alteration in him ſhould prevent it. You are well convinced how dear he is to me. It was his deſtiny to quit an able maſter at a very tender age. As far as I can judge, he has a tolerable underſtanding: but I am not certain of this, for I do not ſufficiently know him. When he is with me, he always keeps ſilence: whether my preſence confuſes or is irkſome to him, I know not; or whether the ſhame of his ignorance cloſes his lips. I doubt it is the latter; for I perceive but too clearly his antipathy for letters: I never ſaw it ſtronger in any one; he dreads and deteſts nothing ſo much as a book: yet he has

has been brought up at Parma, at Verona, and Padua."

"I SOMETIMES direct a few ſharp pleaſantries at this diſpoſition. 'Take care, I ſay, leſt you ſhould eclipſe your neighbour Virgil?' When I talk in this manner, he looks down, and bluſhes. On this behaviour alone I build my hope. He has modeſty, and a docility which renders him ſuſceptible of every impreſſion made on him."

IN the month of June 1352, the people of Avignon beheld a very extraordinary ſpectacle: this was the entrance of that formidable Tribune, Rienzi. We ſhall here relate the circumſtances that befel him after his fall, and that brought him to the tribunal of the Pope.

AFTER he left the capitol, he hid himſelf in the caſtle of St. Angelo. But ſtill in hopes of ſome change, he got an angel painted

painted on the walls of a church, with the arms of Rome, holding in her hand a croſs with a dove at the top, and trampling under her feet an aſp, a baſiliſk, a lion, and a dragon; and he went in diſguiſe to behold the effect this painting produced. When he ſaw the people cover it with mud, he found his power was at an end: he ſet out the next day for Naples, where he arrived in January 1348. The King of Hungary, then maſter of it, received Rienzi kindly, with whom he had ſome time had a ſecret correſpondence. The news of this diſturbed the Pope, who by his legate deſired the prince to ſend to him that perverſe and excommunicated heretic. Whether the King of Hungary feared to diſpleaſe the Pope, or perceived that Rienzi was a madman not to be relied upon, he forſook him. He then went over to Duke Warner, and deſired him to reeſtabliſh him at Rome; but this did not ſucceed. Perceiving himſelf abandoned

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by all the world, and without reſource, he wandered about Italy for ſome time, and then retired among the hermits of Mount Majella, where he paſſed the year 1349. In the year of the jubilee, 1350, he mixed in diſguiſe with the ſtrangers who went to Rome, and found that city more likely to favour his attempts, from the diſorders that again took place in it. There was a ſedition ſuppoſed to be of his raiſing. A mob beſieged the Legate's palace, and two arrows were drawn upon him from an iron grate, one of which pierced through his hat, but did not wound him. The Cardinal, who knew that Rienzi was at Rome, wrote to the Pope what he thought of this matter, and ſent him the arrow with his letter.

THE Pope wrote to the Legate to continue the proceedings againſt Rienzi; and if he could lay hold of him, to ſend him to Avignon: in the mean time, to declare him incapable of any office, and

to

to interdict him fire and water. Rienzi, on this, was determined to throw himſelf on the protection of the Emperor Charles, though he had offended him when he was governor in Rome, by citing him to his tribunal; but he believed this prince was too generous to take revenge on an enemy who delivered himſelf up to his mercy.

HE ſet out therefore from Rome, diſguiſed as uſual with the caravans of pilgrims; and went to Prague, where the Emperor, who was alſo King of Bohemia, held his court. He went firſt to the houſe of a Florentine apothecary, whom he deſired to go with him to the Emperor, to whom he addreſſed this ſingular ſpeech: "There is at Mount Majella a hermit called Brother Ange, who has ſent an ambaſſador to the Pope, and who ſends me to you to inform you that till now, God the Father and Son have reigned in the world; but that for the future,

future, it will be the Holy Ghoſt." At theſe words, the Emperor diſcovered it was Rienzi; and replied, "I believe you are the Tribune of Rome." "It is true, ſaid Rienzi, I am that Tribune who has been driven out of Rome." The Emperor ſent for the ambaſſadors, biſhops, and doctors, and made Rienzi repeat in their preſence what he had ſaid; to which he added, "The perſon ſent to the Pope will uſe the ſame language; the Pope will have him burned, and he will be raiſed again the third day by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. The people of Avignon will take up arms, and kill the Pope and the Cardinals: and they will elect an Italian Pope, who will tranſport the holy See to Rome: that Pope will crown you King of Sicily, and of Calabria, with a crown of gold; and he will crown me King of Rome, and all Italy, with a crown of ſilver."

They made him write down what he had

had ſaid. The Emperor ſent it to the Pope, ſealed with his own ſeal; and had the Tribune carefully guarded, till he ſhould receive an anſwer from the Pope. As Rienzi was accuſed of hereſy, the Emperor, in reſpect to the authority of the church, put him into the hands of the Archbiſhop of Prague, who alſo wrote to the Pope to know his will concerning him: in the mean time he treated his priſoner with kindneſs, but took care to have him well guarded.

Clement returned the emperor thanks for the important ſervice he had rendered the church in ſtopping this ſon of Belial; and deſired he might be ſent him under a good guard, or take his trial at Prague, if he choſe it. But Rienzi, when he heard this, demanded to be ſent in perſon to the Pope; ſaid he was ready to ſubmit to his judgment, and to be puniſhed if he was found guilty. He wrote for this purpoſe a long letter to Cardinal Gui of Bologna,

Bologna, whoſe immenſe bounty, ſays he, I have proved; and to deſire that after his examination he might be permitted to take the habit of St. John of Jeruſalem, having wiſhed ever ſince his fall to conſecrate himſelf to that holy order: my marriage ought not to be an obſtacle, added he, becauſe my little wife will become a religious as well as myſelf. It appears by this letter of Rienzi, that his wife, his children, his nephews, and his ſiſter were hid at Prague, and lived upon charity. From the priſons of Prague he was brought to thoſe of Limoges, and did not get to Avignon till this year. In all the places through which he paſſed the people came out to meet him, and offered him deliverance; to which he always anſwered, that he went freely and of his own accord to Avignon. His march had more the air of a conqueror than a criminal. Petrarch ſpeaks of it thus: "This Tribune, formerly ſo powerful, ſo dreaded, now the moſt unhappy of

men, has been brought hither as a priſoner; I praiſed and I adviſed him; I loved his virtue, and I admired his courage: I thought Rome was going to reſume under him the empire ſhe formerly held; and that in exciting the emulation of Rienzi I ſhould participate his glory. Ah! if he had continued as he began, he would have been praiſed and admired by all the world. This man, who made the wicked tremble, and who gave the brighteſt hopes to the good, is come before this court humbled and deſpiſed. He who was never ſeen without a train of the greateſt lords in Italy, and a multitude of people, marches now between two ſerjeants! The populace run out to meet him, eager to ſee the man of whom they have heard ſo much."

"The moment he arrived, the ſovereign Pontiff committed his cauſe to three princes of the church, to determine his puniſhment."

"In entering the city, he aſked if I was there? I knew not whether he hoped in me for ſuccour, or what I could do to ſerve him."

"In the proceſs againſt him, he is accuſed of nothing criminal: they do not even impute to him the having joined with bad men, the abandoning the public cauſe, or the having fled from the capitol when he might have lived and died there with honour. It is his undertaking, not the end they reproach him with. In my mind what they accuſe him of is to his glory; that the republic ſhould be free, and that at Rome only they ſhould treat of the affairs of the republic. And is this a crime worthy of the wheel and of the gibbet? A Roman citizen afflicted to ſee his country, which is by right the miſtreſs of the world, become the ſlave of the vileſt men! This is the foundation of his charge! It now remains to be determined

what is the puniſhment due to ſuch a crime. His beginning was glorious; but all on a ſudden he changed his conduct. I wrote him a ſevere letter on the occaſion: he abandoned the good and delivered himſelf over to the wicked, but of this he is not accuſed: whatever be his end, his beginning is ever to be admired."

Clement was glad to have Rienzi in his power; he was brought before him, and did not appear the leaſt diſconcerted. He maintained that he was accuſed unjuſtly of hereſy, and demanded that his cauſe ſhould be re-examined with more equity. The Pope made him no anſwer, and ordered them to put him in the priſon prepared for him. It was a high tower in which he was ſhut up, faſtened by the foot with a chain which hung from the top: excepting this he was treated with mildneſs, and ſupplied from the Pope's kitchen; and they gave him books, among others Livy and the

bible, for of theſe he was particularly fond. We are not told who were the three princes of the church to whom his cauſe was committed, but it is ſuppoſed they were the Cardinals of Bologna, of Tailerand, and of Deux.

THE crimes imputed to him were, drawing away the city of Rome from the dominion of the Pope; declaring it free; and pretending that the rights of the Roman empire reſided ſtill in the people of Rome. Some ſaid he merited death, and others that he ſhould be declared infamous, and incapable of tranſmitting any eſtate to poſterity. Rienzi demanded a trial according to law, and to be allowed an advocate to defend his cauſe: but this was denied him. This enraged Petrarch, who wrote a long but ſecret letter to the people of Rome, to do ſomething in his favour; but it produced no effect. The contents of it were, that Rome ought to be the monarch of the world,

world, and the arbiter of all human deciſions. Rienzi, as it happened, had no occaſion for it. His affairs changed on a ſudden; and he owed his preſervation to a moſt extraordinary circumſtance, which ſhews the ſpirit that prevailed in the court of the Pope. It is Petrarch who informs us of it, in a letter to the Prior of the Holy Apoſtles.

"I HAVE learned, ſays he, by the letters of my friends, it being rumoured at Avignon that Rienzi was a great poet, they thought it a kind of ſacrilege to put a man to death of ſo ſacred a profeſſion; as Cicero ſpeaks in his oration for the poet Licinius Archias, who had been his maſter. I own I am overwhelmed with joy, to ſee that men who are not acquainted with the muſes themſelves, ſhould grant them this ſingular privilege; and under the ſhadow of their name ſhould ſave a man from death, odious to his judges, and whom they had agreed

to find guilty of a capital crime. What could they have obtained more under the reign of Auguſtus, in the time when the greateſt honours were paid them, and they came from all parts to behold this unparalleled prince, the maſter of kings, and the friend of poets! I felicitate the muſes and Rienzi! Heaven forbid I ſhould envy him a name which is of ſuch ſervice to him. But if you aſk me what I think? I anſwer, that Rienzi is a very eloquent man, ſkilful, inſinuating, and a good orator, with few thoughts, but an agreeable vivacity in his compoſitions. I believe he may have read all the poets, but I think he no more merits the name of a poet, than he would that of an embroiderer for wearing an embroidered habit. Horace ſays, that to be a poet, it is not ſufficient to make verſes; and I even doubt whether Rienzi ever made a ſingle verſe! I thought you would be pleaſed to hear of an event in which the life of a man was in danger,

becauſe he wiſhed to ſave the republic; and to learn that the ſame man eſcapes the peril under the name of a poet, though he never made a ſingle verſe."

"VIRGIL himſelf would not have obtained ſuch a redemption! For it is certain that before ſuch judges, Virgil would have paſſed for a ſorcerer rather than a poet."

IN another letter wrote to an Abbe, not named, he ſhows what a rage for poetry prevailed at this time in the city of *Avignon*.

"NEVER were the words of Horace more exactly verified, "Wiſe or ignorant we all write verſes!" It is a mournful conſolation to have ſo many ſick companions: I had rather be diſeaſed alone; I am tormented by my own diſorders and thoſe of others; they do not let me breathe. Verſes and epiſtles rain in upon

me every day from all parts of the world, from France, Germany, Greece and England. I do not know myſelf; they take me for the judge of all human underſtanding. If I anſwer all the letters I receive, no mortal will be ſo full of buſineſs: if I do not, they will ſay I am diſdainful and inſolent. If I cenſure, I ſhall be an odious critic; if I praiſe, a nauſeous flatterer. But this would be nothing, if this contagion had not reached the Roman court. What do you think of our lawyers, and our phyſicians? they no longer conſult Juſtinian or Eſculapius: deaf to the cries of the ſick, and of their clients, they will liſten to none but Virgil and Homer. What do I ſay? Even labourers, carpenters and maſons abandon their hammers and ſhovels to lay hold of Apollo and the Muſes. Do you aſk why formerly poets were ſo rare, and this plague ſo common at preſent? It was becauſe poetry demands an elevated mind, ſuperior to every thing, and free from

from the cares of this world: it muſt have a ſoul made on purpoſe, which it is rare to meet with, from whence it happens that there are ſuch a number of verſifiers in the ſtreets, and ſo few poets on Parnaſſus: they go to the foot of the mountain, but ſcarcely one aſcends it. Judge what pleaſure thoſe muſt have, who attain its ſummit, ſince thoſe who only view it at a diſtance, abandon for it their affairs and their wealth, however avaricious they are? I felicitate my country for having produced ſome ſpirits worthy to mount upon Pegaſus, and riſe along with him: if love to it does not blind me, I ſee ſuch at Florence, at Padua, at Verona, at Sulmone, and at Naples; every-where elſe we behold nothing but rhimers, who creep along upon the ground."

"I REPROACH myſelf for having by my example contributed to this madneſs. My laurels were too green, and I am now tormented for my deſire of obtaining them.

them. In my houſe, and out of doors, wherever I ſet my feet, verſifying frantics ſurround me, overwhelm me with queſtions, brawl and diſpute, and talk of things which would have been quite beyond the aim of Homer or of Virgil. I am afraid leſt the magiſtrates ſhould accuſe me of having corrupted the republic. The other day a father came up to me in tears, and ſaid, 'See how you treat me, who have always loved you. You have been the death of my only ſon.' I was ſo ſtruck with theſe words, and the air of the man who ſpoke them, that I remained ſome time motionleſs. At laſt, recovering myſelf, I replied, that I neither knew him nor his ſon. 'It is of little conſequence whether you know him or not, replied the old man: he knows you too well. I have ruined myſelf to bring him up to the law; and now he tells me, he will follow no ſteps but yours. I am thus diſappointed of all my hopes; for I much fear he will never

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be either a lawyer or a poet.' I ſmiled at this, and thoſe who were with me; but the old man went away in grief and rage. Happily, this contagion has not yet reached Vaucluſe, the air of which is not perhaps very ſuſceptible of foreign impreſſions: there is only my fiſherman, who, though old, adviſes himſelf, as Perſius ſays, to dream on Parnaſſus. If this delirium ſhould ſpread, ſhepherds, fiſhermen, labourers, and the beaſts themſelves will ruminate and bellow out verſes."

In the beginning of Auguſt 1352, the Cardinals of Bologna and Taillerand ſent by the Pope's order for Petrarch: he obeyed the ſummons, and found it was in order to receive the place of ſecretary to the Pope. He repreſented to his patrons and friends, that he could never give up liberty and leiſure for any worldly gain: "This wealth, ſays he, would be a real miſery: a yoke of gold or ſilver would not be lighter to me than one of wood

wood or of lead. I deſpiſed riches when I ſtood in need of them, and it would be a ſhame to run after them now I can do without them. We ſhould proportion the proviſions for our journey to the length of our rout: I am approaching the end of my race, and ought to be more occupied with the place of reſt, than the accommodations on the way." To this he adds, that it would have been more honeſt, and more excuſable, to deſire theſe advantages, when he had a brother and friends who were indigent; that he was no longer in this ſituation, his brother being a Carthuſian, and all his friends dead or well-placed: that he wanted nothing at preſent; but, ſhould he once open the door to worldly deſires, he ſhould want every thing. He therefore with tears conjured theſe friends, who had laid a thouſand ſnares to gain this point, to let him live in his own way, to preſerve his honour, and not to impoſe a burden, the weight of which would

would overwhelm him. All his repreſentations and prayers were to no purpoſe; they dragged him to his footſtool, who, as one ſays, opens the heavens with his finger, and governs the ſtars by the motion of his cap.

The Pope, who loved Petrarch, and always received him with pleaſure, ſaid many obliging things to him. He had always wiſhed to attach a man of his merit to his court; and he thought it was incumbent on him to ſacrifice his liberty, for an office at once honourable and advantageous. "Single I ſtood, ſays he, mournful and diſmayed; my head was preſented to the ſacrifice, when fortune befriended, and opened to me the door of liberty."

Every one agreed that Petrarch was well fitted to diſcharge the employment to which they deſtined him, for his wiſdom and fidelity. They only reproached

him

him with one fault, that his ſtile was too elevated for the church of Rome. He thought at firſt they meant this in irony: but his friends, and particularly the Cardinals Bologna and Taillerand, aſſured him that he muſt lower his tone, and not take ſuch high flights. When he heard this, his joy was that of a priſoner, who views his priſon-door ſet open to him. He was deſired to write ſomething in a more eaſy ſtyle: inſtead of doing this, he ſtretched the wings of imagination to their utmoſt extent, that he might ſoar above every idea of thoſe who wiſhed to enſlave him.

THEY gave him the ſubject. "Though it was not a work of imagination and poetry, ſays he, Apollo and the Muſes did me good ſervice. Moſt of thoſe who read my compoſition, ſaid they could not comprehend a word of it. Others ſaid, they ſuppoſed I wrote in Greek, or ſome other barbarous language: they would ſend me

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to ſchool at my age to learn a low and creeping ſtyle. With Cicero, I know but three ſtyles; the ſublime, which he calls grave; the moderate, which he calls middling; and the ſimple, which he calls extenuated. In this age, ſcarce any one has attained the firſt, and few arrive at the ſecond; the third is the ſtyle of the many. They tell me to lower my ſtyle: that is impoſſible, I anſwer, becauſe I am at the loweſt already; lower than that is no ſtyle at all, but a baſe and abject manner of ſpeaking: thus I am out of the difficulty, and my liberty is preſerved. I feel the pleaſure more ſenſibly, for having been on the brink of ſlavery. I am delighted that people who believe themſelves elevated, have diſcovered that I flew beyond their ſphere: I will never more expoſe myſelf to the ſame peril; nothing ſhall ever tempt me; I will be deaf to the prayers of my friends, and conſult myſelf alone in matters ſo eſſential to my peace."

PETRARCH having thus eſcaped the greateſt danger he had ever run, after having thanked God for his deliverance, ſet out for Vaucluſe, where he paſſed the remainder of Auguſt in a delightful tranquillity, waiting with impatience for the autumn, to return to Italy. Writing to a friend, he gives this pleaſing account of his calm employments at Vaucluſe:

"NOTHING pleaſes me ſo much as my perfect freedom. I riſe at midnight, & go out at break of day: I ſtudy in the fields as in my cloſet; I think, read, and even write there. I combat *idleneſs*: I chaſe away *ſleep*, *indulgence*, and *pleaſures*. In the day I run over the craggy mountains, the humid valleys, and ſhelter myſelf in the profound caverns. Sometimes I walk, attended only by my reflections, along the banks of the Sorgia: meeting with no perſon to diſtract my mind, I become every day more calm; and ſend my cares ſometimes before, ſome-

times I leave them behind me. I recall the paſt, and deliberate on the future. Fond of the place I am in, every ſituation becomes in turn agreeable to me, except Avignon. I find here Athens, Rome, and Florence, as my imagination deſires: here I enjoy all my friends, not only thoſe with whom I have lived, but thoſe who have long been dead, and whom I know only by their works."

The Cardinal of Bologna ſet out for Paris in the beginning of September, to negociate a peace between the Kings of France and England. Petrarch went to take leave of him, and requeſt his orders for Italy. The Cardinal told him he ſhould be only a month away, and he hoped he ſhould find him at his return. He took with him his faithful Achates, Peter, Abbe of St. Benigne. The Cardinal wanted to procure Petrarch ſome good eſtabliſhment in France; and wrote upon the road to deſire him to wait at

leaſt till he ſhould have written to him from Paris, upon a great affair which concerned him. "I aſk you, ſays he, only to wait one month." In obedience to theſe orders, Petrarch paſſed September and October at Avignon.

At this time, nothing was ſpoken of but the cruel war between the Genoeſe and the Venetians: their loſſes were on each ſide extreme.

Petrarch wrote a letter to the Genoeſe, who were the victors, to induce them to peace: and collects together the motives for their union with the Venetians, in a very artful manner:

"I applied at firſt, ſays he, to the Venetians my neighbours: I thought it my duty. As a man, I cannot but be touched with the miſeries of humanity: as an Italian, I ought to be ſenſible to the calamities of my country; and I believe

lieve no one feels them more, I addreſs you with the more confidence, knowing with whom I have to do. No nation is more terrible in war, or more amiable in peace. You have conquered, it is now time to repoſe. In the heat of combat, it is valour that ſpills the blood of men; but after it is over, humanity ſhould cloſe their wounds. There are none but ſavage beaſts, with whom carnage ſucceeds victory! Who can read without ſhuddering, of a battle which laſted two days and one winter night? Who can repreſent the horrors of it? The dreadful bluſtering of the wind, the rattling of the ſails, the claſh of arms! The daſhing of the veſſels againſt one another, the hiſſing of the arrows flying through the darkneſs, and the cries and groans of the wounded! To you may be applied what Virgil ſaid of that famous night, in which Troy was reduced to aſhes: 'Who can paint the ſhocking carnage which ſhe

covered with her mantle, or ſhed tears enough to bewail the blood ſpilt in it"

"REFLECT at preſent that your enemies, as well as yourſelves, are Italians; that you were once friends, and that your quarrel is only about rank and ſuperiority. Would to God that renouncing a war which has ſo ſlight a foundation, you would unite your arms to puniſh the perfidious inſtigators of it; and then turn them to the deliverance of the holy land from the Turks. This would indeed be uſeful to the world, and to poſterity! Great cities in peace, are like thoſe ſtrong bodies who appear healthy without, but have many internal maladies, occaſioned by a too long repoſe. Motion and agitation are neceſſary to cities as well as to men, to diſſipate the bad humours theſe inward diſeaſes produce, and which are much more dangerous than thoſe which appear without. This merits your attention: it is beſt to live in peace, when

we can; but when that is impoſſible, a foreign war is preferable to a war at home."

"I CANNOT read the ſtars; but I venture to predict, that in foreign wars you will always have the advantage, and that you have only to fear interior enemies How many examples are there of cities whom nothing could have deſtroyed, but wars with one another! You are becoming a proof of this yourſelves. Recollect the time when you were the moſt flouriſhing of all people: I was then a child, and remember it only as a dream. Your country appeared a celeſtial paradiſe; ſuch ſurely were the Elyſian fields! What a beautiful object towards the ſea! Thoſe towers which roſe to heaven! Thoſe palaces where art excelled nature! Thoſe hills covered with cedars, vines, and olives! Thoſe houſes of marble built under the rocks! Thoſe delicious retreats on the ſhore, whoſe ſand ſhines

like gold, on which the foaming waves, daſhing their cryſtal heads, attract the eyes of the pilot, and ſtop the motion of the rowers! Can we behold without admiration, the more than mortal figures that inhabited your city; and all the delights of life, with which your woods and fields abounded! Thoſe who entered it, thought they were got into the temple of felicity and joy. It might be ſaid at this time of Genoa, as antiently of Rome, it was the city of kings!"

"You were then maſters of the ſea, and without your leave no one dared to ſail on it. From this happy period deſcend to the time when pride, luxury, and envy, the common effects of proſperity, ſubdued your nation, and reduced it to that miſery your enemies attempted in vain. Great gods! What a difference! That beautiful ſhore, that magnificent city, appeared uncultivated, deſerted, and ruined! Thoſe ſuperb palaces, become

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the trading-places of thieves, ſtruck the paſſenger with horror inſtead of admiration! In fine, your city, beſieged by its exiles, the Dorias and Spinolas on the ſide of the Gibbelines, aſſiſted by the Milaneſe, ſuffered all the plagues of war; when king Robert, the glory of our age, who came to its ſuccour, remained blocked up in it a whole year. They fought (a thing incredible and unheard of before) not only on land and ſea, but in the air and under the earth."

"AFTER this, you were agitated ſeveral years by inteſtine commotions, having no enemies but thoſe within your walls; till at laſt, inſtructed by paſt misfortunes, you elected a chief, which is undoubtedly the beſt ſituation for a republic. This changed the face of your city; your clouds were diſſipated, your quarrels extinguiſhed, and peace, harmony, and juſtice were re-eſtabliſhed."

"You may now with eaſe take warning for the future. There is an old proverb which ſays, 'How many things are ill done, becauſe they are done but once!' You may recover what you have loſt. You have learned from experience that human proſperities are ſlippery and uncertain, and that you owe your misfortunes to interior diſcord. You begin as it were to live again; take care of thoſe rocks on which you have formerly ſplit. Be united among yourſelves; love juſtice and peace; and if you cannot live without war, carry it into foreign countries, where you will always *find* enemies to contend with."

Avignon, November 1352.

A FEW days after writing this letter, Petrarch, tired with waiting for the Cardinal of Bologna, went ſecretly from Avignon, giving it out he was gone for Italy; and he hid himſelf at Vaucluſe.

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On his arrival there, he wrote thus to the Cardinal:

"You ordered me to wait for you. You were to be abſent but a month; but the grand monarch who is attached to you by the bonds of love as well as of blood, the charms of Paris and of the Seine, have made you forget your promiſe. I am not aſtoniſhed at it. For my part, the dreary city of Avignon, and the boiſterous Rhone, have detained me till now their priſoner: but no longer able to ſupport that ſituation, I am come to take refuge in my retreat, and wait your commands. If you continue at Paris, I ſhall ſoon ſet out for Italy, without bidding adieu to my friends, who will detain me a priſoner in that vile city; from whence my ſpirit takes its flight, and leaves my body to its fate. The two months I have paſſed there, have appeared to me to be years. The ſervice you would do me is, I doubt not, conſidera-

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ble: your bounties are always ſo. I truſt my abſence will not hurt the intereſt you take in my friends: if you will beſtow upon them what you have deſtined to me, you will confer on me a great obligation. I have enough, and too much for the few years that remain of life: I wiſh for nothing more. You are the kindeſt, the beſt of patrons. I flatter myſelf you will pardon me, if I yield to neceſſity, to which the greateſt kings have ſubmitted. I have obeyed you as long as I could."

Vaucluſe, November.

AFTER having been ſome days at Vaucluſe, with no news of the Cardinal, and deſpairing of his return, Petrarch determined to ſet out for Italy. The autumn of this year was uncommonly dry; it had not rained for ſeveral months. The weather was bright and ſerene; he thought he might depend on its continuance;

"though

"though there is nothing, says he, we can leſs reckon upon in winter." He had in all his former journeys always endured exceſſive heats, or violent rains.

He ſet out the 16th of November with his books and papers, which he meant to tranſport to his Parnaſſus in Italy. He was got a very little way, when the weather clouded, and a heavy rain came on. He was at firſt tempted to go back; but he took courage, a port being not far off, and continued his rout. He muſt paſs through Cavaillon; and he wiſhed to ſtop there, to take leave of Philip de Cabaſſole. It was almoſt night when he arrived: the Biſhop was ſick, and had concealed his diſorder, from Petrarch, that he might not afflict him: he received him as his good angel; tears of joy ran down his face. "I am no longer in pain for myſelf, ſaid he to his brother; with my friend Petrarch, health has re-entered my habitation." He was

ignorant

ignorant that Petrarch was going to Italy, and that he meant to reach Durance that night. When he was informed of this, he appeared in ſuch extreme grief, and was ſo urgent with Petrarch to ſtay at leaſt that night, that he could not deny him. It poured all night, which diſtreſſed Petrarch, who had deſigned to ſet out early in the morning; and he feared for his books and papers. At laſt he determined on leaving them behind, and expoſing himſelf alone to the injuries of the weather, to which he was hardened by cuſtom, when an unforeſeen obſtacle ſtopped his progreſs. Some of the Biſhop's ſervants told him that the banditti of the Alps were come down to the Var on the ſide of Nice, and laid every thing waſte, which rendered it impoſſible to go that road to Italy; and this was Petrarch's rout, that before he quitted France he might paſs through Montrieux to ſee his brother Gerard. The Biſhop expreſſed great joy at this news; he was

perſuaded

perſuaded it would induce Petrarch to renounce his project. Petrarch continued for ſome time irreſolute: but the repeated requeſts of the Biſhop, and the violent rains which continued and rendered the roads impaſſible, at laſt determined him to ſtay. He retired to his chamber to ſleep for an hour; but the rain had made way through the roof and come down upon him. He roſe therefore and ſaid matins; and then went into the Biſhop's chamber whom he found awakened.

He ſpent two days at Cavaillon, and then ſent a part of his ſervants to Italy, that he might be the more retired, and ſet out himſelf for Vaucluſe. The dread of ſpoiling his books and papers influenced him to this determination; we ſee, ſays he, what a conſtraint are riches on peace and liberty. The fine weather returned juſt as his people were got too far to be recalled. It ſeems, ſays he, as if Providence would put a rein on my de-

ſire

ſire to paſs into Italy: he knows better than we do what is for our good, which is not always what is moſt agreeable to ourſelves.

PETRARCH paſſed the reſt of November at Vaucluſe, and all the month of December, in which there happened an event that intereſted all Europe.

CLEMENT VI. was forced at laſt to yield to the diſeaſe which had ſo long oppreſſed him; he forgot, ſaid Petrarch, or he deſpiſed the advice I had given him. The phyſicians delivered him from the embarraſſments of the papacy by improper remedies, and too frequent bleedings. He died the 6th of December, 1352. Villani ſays he died of a lingring fever, others of an abſceſs: and ſome ſaid that he was poiſoned: his body was carried the next day to the church of Notre Dame, where a very pompous funeral was beſtowed on it. Various have been the opinions

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concerning this Prince. Villani ſpeaks only of his faults, and the Eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians reproach him for not tranſlating the holy See to Rome; but others own he was one of the greateſt men that ever ſat in St. Peter's chair, and though he had faults he had likewiſe very great and amiable virtues; that he was too fond of women, but he governed his eſtates in a manner that was a model for all Princes. One inſtance of his influence over a foreign Prince does him honour. He ordered Caſimir king of Poland to ſend back his miſtreſſes, and to be faithful to his wife. This Prince refuſed at firſt, but ſubmitted at laſt, and underwent the penance impoſed on him.

CLEMENT had the pleaſure of beſtowing kingdoms; and gave away more benefices than any one of his predeceſſors. Nothing was ſo painful to him as to refuſe a requeſt; and when it was not in his power to grant it, he always found ſome

expedient

expedient to ſend the perſons away not only contented but obliged by his behaviour. He diſtributed the treaſures of the church with a liberal profuſion, and expended conſiderable ſums in uſeful buildings, in marrying orphans, and in relieving noble families who had fallen to decay. Petrarch aſſures us no one better merited the name he bore; and his clemency was ſo great, that a perſon who had offended him grievouſly, having preſumed afterwards to aſk a favour of him, inſtead of revenge for his former behaviour, he inſtantly granted his petition.

CLEMENT was naturally eloquent, and ſpoke without preparation in a very elegant manner; his conſiſtorial diſcourſes which are in the library at Paris, prove this. He had a ſingular talent in conveying his ſentiments; they appeared the ſentiments of thoſe he converſed with, whoſe hearts he could move at pleaſure. He delighted in peace and harmony, and

as much as poſſible ſtifled every ſeed of war. He attempted to eſtabliſh peace between France and England; he accompliſhed it between Hungary and Naples; and was preparing to unite the Greek and Latin churches.

But Petrarch was never fond of this Pope, who was not an Italian, and who had completed the palace of Avignon inſtead of removing the Holy See to Rome. A few days after his death Petrarch wrote to the Biſhop of Cavaillon, as follows:

"I send you three natural curioſities of a very different kind; a golden fiſh with ſilver ſcales called Turtura; my fiſherman's ſon took it in the beautiful water of my fountain. The ſecond is a flat drake who has been long an inhabitant of its banks; neither the air nor water could ſave it from the purſuit of my dog. The third is an epiſtle which I have fiſhed myſelf with the nets of my

mind, in the waves where my ſoul ſwims in the midſt of dangerous rocks; you will have the goodneſs to keep the two firſt, and return the laſt when you have enough of it: you know my reaſon; truth begets hatred. If this was true in the time of Terence, how much more is it ſo at preſent! Read it then in private, and ſend it back till we ſhall ſee what God or fortune ſhall do for us. I would ſhow it to no other perſon; you will judge by that of my confidence."

THE Biſhop of Cavaillon returned it, and aſſured Petrarch it gave him much pleaſure. "I am delighted, replied he, my letter has pleaſed you. I find I like it better now it has obtained your ſuffrage. It is addreſſed to you, becauſe you are the declared enemy of every vice. I ſend you a ſecond letter to the clergy of Padua, on the death of Ildebrand our biſhop. His virtues were above our higheſt praiſe. Compare this letter with that

I ſent

I ſent yeſterday, and ſee if my ſtyle is as proper for praiſe as cenſure. The faults that you will find aſcribe to myſelf, and my excellencies to the nature of the ſubjects; for in truth, it is as eaſy to praiſe the one as to blame the other. Who would not be eloquent in the treating of ſuch ſubjects?"

THE firſt of theſe letters was a ſatire on Clement. Petrarch had before cenſured him, under the name of Pamphylius, for the little care he took of the flock confided to his truſt by Jeſus Chriſt, and for the ſoft and vain-glorious life that he led, ſo oppoſite to the conduct of the primitive Chriſtians; and he threatens him that his Maſter will ſoon come, and call him to an account.

CLEMENT, under the name of Mitian, replied thus to Pamphylius:

"No one can be more churliſh and

ſevere than you are: but know, it is eaſier to cenſure the manners of others, than to juſtify one's own. Ungrateful traitor! Have not you denied your Maſter, and abandoned your flock, to avoid perſecution? Did the flock given to your care by Jeſus Chriſt, ever ſuffer more than under you? Not a valley in Rome but you have filled with blood. I ſhould be aſhamed to lead the *ſorry* life in which you glory. "I have cheſts full of money;" true; and can I do better than make uſe of it, for the ſweets and conveniences of life? I would chooſe my ſpouſe, the church, *ſhould* be adorned; that at *her toilet ſhould* be ſeen that fine looking-glaſs preſented me by the ſhepherd of Biſance; and that every one ſhould know her to be a queen. I will not lead my flock as you do among thickets and rocks, but into fat paſtures. I would have them want for nothing, and enjoy every thing. Heaven forbid that I ſhould be ſo cruel to ſeparate the

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he and ſhe goats, the bulls and the heifers! They were intended for companions to each other. Your threatenings give me no concern; the Maſter I ſerve is good, as well as powerful."

On the death of Clement, the Cardinals felt the neceſſity of making ſome reformation in the Roman court: and to do this, they caſt their eyes on John Birel, the general of the Carthuſians, for his ſucceſſor. He was a Limoſin, famed for the ſanctity of his life, and his zeal for the glory of God. No human influence affected him: he preached repentance with power, and he wrote to princes with the utmoſt freedom to exhort them to reform their lives. The Cardinal de Taillerand was alarmed when he ſaw them inclined to ſuch a choice; what are you going to do? ſaid he: do not you perceive that this monk, accuſtomed to govern anchorites, will oblige us all to live like them? he will make us go on 1353.

foot as did the Apoſtles, and our fine horſes he will ſend to the plough." The Cardinals were embarraſſed, and the election would have been ſpun out to a great length, had not king John of France arrived at Avignon to procure the election of a prelate devoted to him. This haſtened their choice. The Cardinal de Taillerand, who had the greateſt intereſt in the conclave, cauſed it to fall upon Alberti Cardinal of Oſtia, who took the name of Innocent VI. He was born in a village of Limoges, of parents little known. This Pontiff owed his elevation to the reputation he had for integrity and a good life; and his capacity for reforming the Roman court by his example ſtill more than by his laws. In effect, ſoon after his election he ſuppreſſed the reſerves of benefices, fixed bounds to pluralities, obliged the incumbents to reſidence, and diminiſhed his table and his train; an example the Cardinals made no haſte to follow.

PETRARCH was not much pleaſed at this election. An old ignorant Cardinal, but a great civilian, maintained that Petrarch was a magician, becauſe he read Virgil, and he had perſuaded Cardinal Alberti to think ſo too, though he had been profeſſor of the canon law with ſucceſs in the univerſity of Tholouſe. He was a man of good life and little knowledge, ſays Villani.

PETRARCH in his eclogue on Clement the VI. put theſe words into his mouth; "There ſhall come after me a dull and gloomy man, who by his four refuſals ſhall repair the wrongs I did the church by my over abundant facility. He ſhall fatten the Roman paſtures, with the ſmoke of Auvergne." After the coronation of Innocent, the Cardinals of Taillerand and Bologna wrote to Petrarch that he muſt come immediately to kiſs his feet, and compliment him upon his exaltation. Petrarch had often ſeen him at

the Cardinal de Taillerand's, who amuſed himſelf with joking Petrarch before him, on his powers of magic. Whatever repugnance he had, Petrarch thought it neceſſary to obey theſe orders: but his chief concern was the leaving his faithful fiſherman who was fallen ſick. Soon after he got to Avignon, one of his ſervants whom he had left at Vaucluſe to take care of his beloved friend, came poſt to inform him he was dead. He wrote inſtantly to the two Cardinals as follows:

"If Regulus the terror of the Carthaginians being in Africa, and charged with an important negociation, bluſhed not to aſk his diſmiſſion of the ſenate, becauſe the man was dead who cultivated his field; why ſhould I bluſh to make ſuch a requeſt to my two illuſtrious patrons who am charged with no public, and who have few private affairs. Yeſterday I loſt the guardian of my retreat; he

he was not unknown to you: he cultivated for me a few acres of very bad land. I fear not from you the anſwer made to Regulus by the ſenate, Continue to work for the republic, ſhe ſhall take care of your field. The field of Regulus was at Rome; mine is at Vaucluſe; a place you are ſcarcely acquainted with. Scipio, the other ſcourge of Africa, and commanding with ſucceſs in Spain, aſked his diſmiſſion alſo becauſe his daughter had no portion. I am in the ſame caſe at preſent; my library, which I conſider as my daughter, has loſt its friend. That ruſtic man, whom I can never lament as he deſerves, had more prudence and even urbanity than is often to be found in cities, and beſides this, he was the moſt faithful animal that the earth ever produced: to him I confided my books, and all that was moſt dear to me. I was abſent three years from Vaucluſe; at my return nothing was wanting, nor a ſingle thing diſplaced.

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He could not read, but he loved letters; he preſerved with extreme care my choiceſt books, which he knew from being long accuſtomed to them, and how to diſtinguiſh my works from thoſe of the ancients. When I gave a book to his care, he expreſſed great joy, and preſſed it to his breaſt with a ſigh; ſometimes he named the author in a whiſper. To behold him at this moment, one would have thought that the ſight or the touch of a book rendered him wiſer and happier. I have ſpent fifteen years with him, and confided to him my moſt ſecret thoughts, as I would have done to a prieſt of Ceres; and his breaſt was to me the temple of faith and love. I left him two days ago ſlightly indiſpoſed, to obey your orders; his old age was ſound and vigorous, and he is dead. Yeſterday he died, aſking for me continually, and calling upon the name of the Lord. His death affects me extremely, but I ſhould have regretted him ſtill more if his age had

had not foretold that I muſt ſoon have loſt him. Illuſtrious Prelate! let the man depart who is uſeleſs to you, but of very great importance to his field and to his library."

Petrarch obtained the favour he deſired without much difficulty; and it was not poſſible to draw him again to Avignon, notwithſtanding the ſolicitations of the Cardinals, of his friends, and particularly his dear Socrates, to accept an eſtabliſhment in the court of the Pope; to the latter of whom he wrote thus:

"I am content, I have enough for life, I have put a rein on my deſires, and I will have no more. Cincinnatus, Curius, Fabricius, Regulus, after having ſubdued whole nations and led kings in triumph, were not ſo rich as I am. If I open the door to the paſſions, I ſhall always be poor. Avarice, luxury and ambition know no bounds; but avarice,

above

above all, is an unfathomable abyſs. I have cloaths to defend me from the cold, food to nouriſh me, horſes to carry me, a clod of earth to ſleep on, to walk on, and to cover me when I die; what more has the Emperor of Rome? My body is healthy; ſubdued by labour, it is the leſs rebellious to my ſoul. I have books of all kinds; they are my wealth; they feaſt my ſoul with a voluptuouſneſs which is never followed with diſguſt. I have friends whom I conſider as my greateſt treaſures, when they do not aim to deprive me of my liberty. Add to this the greateſt ſecurity, for I have no enemies but thoſe created by envy; and I am not, perhaps, ſorry for thoſe, though I deſpiſe them. I reckon ſtill in the number of my poſſeſſions the approbation and kindneſs of all good men, even of thoſe whom I have never ſeen. Theſe are riches which you may deem poverty; I believe you do: but by what means would you have me gain others? By

lending out to uſury; by trading on the ſeas; by brawling at the bar; by the ſale of my tongue and of my pen; thus fatiguing myſelf inceſſantly to amaſs thoſe treaſures I ſhould preſerve with inquietude, abandon with regret, and which another would diſſipate in extravagance? In one word, what do you require of me? I am rich enough for my own ſatisfaction; muſt I alſo appear rich for the ſatisfaction of others? In fact, is it not my own affair? Does any one conſult the taſte of another in the food he is to eat? Keep then for yourſelf your manner of thinking, and leave me to mine; it can never be ſhaken, for it is eſtabliſhed on ſolid foundations."

Gui Settimo diſtreſſed Petrarch more than any of his friends concerning this matter; his temper was naturally ambitious, and he had conſtantly adhered to the court of the Pope. He loves perſons of merit, ſays he. I wiſh it may be ſo,

replied

replied Petrarch, but this is nothing to me; if the Pope loves only ſuch, he loves a very few, and I cannot flatter myſelf with being one of them, though I would prefer this honour to that of being Pope.

PETRARCH paſſed all the winter at Vaucluſe, where he was like a bird upon the branch ready every moment to take wing for his dear country. He waited the return of ſome ſervants whom he had ſent to Italy, to learn what paſſed there; he was informed that his friends were all aſſembled and waited his coming. Italy appeared to him preferable to all other places; but this account made him tremble for his liberty; and he determined to ſend another ſervant, to ſee if he could not diſcover ſome ſecret retreat where he might enjoy tranquillity. In the mean time he prepared for a journey to Montrieux to ſee his brother Gerard, that he might not quit the country without bidding him farewel; and before he

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ſet out he wrote the following letter to one of his friends:

"On whatever ſide I turn my eyes I find nothing but difficulties. It is time for me to go to the other world, for I cannot obtain eaſe in this. Is this my fault, or that of the world around me? perhaps of all together. One part of the earth is deſolated by war; in another they poſſeſs peace, but are more cruel and miſerable than in war. Here is famine, there his gluttony; here the air, there the manners are infected; here they groan under ſlavery, there they ſuffer from the licentiouſneſs of liberty: this land is dry and barren, the other is expoſed to the inundation of furious rivers; there they freeze, here they burn: here is a dreadful ſolitude, there an importunate multitude; theſe men are a prey to ſavage beaſts, thoſe to the deceits of one another: it muſt be allowed, that a ſituation

ſituation of eaſe and tranquillity is not to be met with upon earth."

PETRARCH ſet out for Montrieux the ſeventh of April, 1353. When he was between Aix and St. Maximin, he met with a company of Roman ladies, who were going on a pilgrimage. By their air and gait he diſtinguiſhed at a diſtance their country and their birth. Drawing near to them, and finding by their language he was not deceived, he ſtopped and politely aſked them from whence they came, and whither they were going. The ſound of an Italian voice ſpread joy through this little company. The oldeſt of them anſwered, Rome is our country, we are going on pilgrimage to St. James. And you, Sir, are you a Roman, are you going to Rome? I am not going thither immediately, replied Petrarch; but my heart is always there. This anſwer inſpired the pilgrims with confidence; they ſurrounded Petrarch, and replied to a thouſand queſtions,

queſtions he aſked them concerning the ſtate of the republic. They told him that John Ceroni had reſigned his poſt, his nature being too quiet for the Romans who were diſguſted with a uniform government; he therefore retired to the caſtle of Abruzze. The nobles on this eſtabliſhed the ancient form of government, and named two ſenators taken out of the houſes of the Urſini and the Colonna, and theſe were in place when Clement died. Soon after they accuſed them of buying up the corn in a time of dearth, to enrich themſelves. This enraged the people, and they beſieged the capitol: one of the ſenators ſaved himſelf by eſcaping at a back door, the other was ſtoned to death. This happend in February, 1353. After this account, Petrarch enquired after his friends, particularly concerning Lelius. How does he do? In what does he employ himſelf? We left him in good health, they replied; he is very happily married, and his wife has brought him ſome

fine children. Petrarch then aſked theſe ladies if he could be ſo happy as to ſerve them in any reſpect. "Every thing, ſays he, in a letter to Lelius, urged me to make them this offer, God, virtue, their country, and their love of you. I wiſhed to divide with them the ſum I had brought with me for my journey: their anſwer was, pray to God that our journey may be ſucceſsful, we aſk only this of you; this reply delighted, but it did not ſurpriſe me. I perceived in it the dignity and diſintereſtedneſs of Roman ladies, differing in this reſpect from women of all other nations, who ſo far from refuſing what is offered them, requeſt with importunity what they have been refuſed." Petrarch, charmed with the diſcourſe of theſe Pilgrims, would have paſſed the day with them, but they were bent on haſtening toward their pious deſign, and he was alſo eager to behold his brother. "While our diſcourſe laſted, adds he, I believed myſelf at Rome converſing

verſing with Cecilia, the wife of Metellus, Sulpitia, the wife of Fulvius, Cornelia of Gracchus, Marcia of Cato, Emilia of Scipio Africanus, and all thoſe famous Heroines, who were the glory of antient Rome. Or to ſpeak more ſuitably to our age and our religion; I thought I ſaw thoſe holy virgins who made ſo diſtinguiſhed a figure in our chriſtian annals, Priſca, Praxede, Prudentia, Agnes, &c."

PETRARCH arrived at Montrieux, the 20th of April, 1353. His preſence rejoiced this ſacred houſe. Gerard was conſidered as its ſecond founder, and was become a perfect anchorite, diſengaged from every thing upon earth; conſummate in piety, and longing for the joys of heaven. I bluſhed, ſaid Petrarch, to behold a younger brother who was formerly my inferior, now riſen ſo far above me. At the ſame time, what

a ſubject of joy and glory is it to have ſuch a pious brother!

AFTER converſing about their old friends, and what had happened to them ſince their laſt interview; Gerard acquainted his brother with the melancholy ſituation which Montrieux was in at preſent. Theſe good monks were perſecuted by ſome neighbouring lords, who had made frequent attempts to pillage and ruin their order. Charles the IId. king of Naples, and Count of Provence, King Robert, and a biſhop of Marſeilles who loved them, had protected and guarded them from the inſults of theſe petty tyrants. They are worſe, ſays Petrarch, than great tyrants: the laſt are commonly generous, and give with one hand, what they take away with the other; but the former are famiſhed harpies, who the more they have, the more eager they are to devour.

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On the death of the biſhop of Marſeilles, theſe hoſtilities were renewed, and that church had at its head a tyrant, whoſe troops were encamped near the monaſtery. When the holy monks before break of day were ſinging the praiſes of God; a ſhepherd all in tears came to inform them they had robbed him of his flock; when they were renewing on the altar the memory of their Saviour's paſſion, a frightened tenant came to acquaint them that a drove of cattle belonging to the tyrants ravaged their vineyards, their meadows, and their gardens; when they juſt began to taſte the conſolation of that ſhort ſleep their laws allowed, they were awakened out of it by the cries of a ſervant, or the Sacriſtan, who were attacked and beaten by theſe banditti. With difficulty they had ſaved their books, and the ornaments of their church, from theſe robbers. Such was their ſituation when Petrarch came among them: he could not hear this account of their diſtreſſes

without tears. They begged he would intercede for them with the king and queen of Naples, that they would be pleaſed, after the example of their predeceſſors, to protect their houſe, and ſend them a guard to defend them from theſe inſults. Petrarch wrote directly to Zenobi to deſire he would implore the protection of the grand Senechal, who loved this order ſo much, that he had juſt built a fine houſe for them near Florence, and he expreſſed to him in the moſt affecting terms the miſery of their ſituation.

THE *Carthuſians, hoping all things from the credit of Petrarch,* contrived every method moſt grateful and obliging, to expreſs their acknowledgment for his letter, and their attachment towards him; and when he left them, they went with him as far as they dared, and ſhed many tears at parting. Petrarch returned to Vaucluſe, and prepared ſoon after for his journey to Italy. He received from all

parts

parts the moſt ſeducing propoſals of eſtabliſhment. Nicholas Acciajoli preſſed him to ſettle in Naples: many things ſuited him in this kingdom; the beauty of the climate, and the friends he had there, who promiſed him the tranquillity he wiſhed, and were perſons on whoſe word he could rely: but the air of this country diſagreed with his conſtitution, from its exceſſive heat. Andrew Dondolo, Doge of Venice, had written to him to eſtabliſh his reſidence at Venice, and propoſed many pleaſures to him there. "It is time for you to ſettle, ſays he; come to Venice, and you ſhall find nothing to trouble your repoſe." Petrarch, in his anſwer, thus apologizes for his wandering life:

"Heroes, Philoſophers, and Apoſtles, ſays he, have led this life. I ſpeak of the primitive Apoſtles; for the modern ones luxuriouſly repoſe on beds of gold, and travel in mind only, over the earth and

the ſea. The inſatiable deſire of ſeeing and knowing all things, has led me from my youth to run over the world. This deſire is quenched by age. I wiſh to fix; but where, is the difficulty. I am like a man on a hard bed, who ſhifts from one ſide to the other, but finds no place of reſt. If to be motionleſs is conſtancy, gouty men are the moſt conſtant, death more ſteady than they, and mountains firmer than them all."

JOHN, king of France, a kind and amiable prince, invited Petrarch to Paris. He owed this favour to the Cardinal of Bologna; the reaſons he gave for not accepting it, were the ſituation of public affairs in France, at war with England; and his diſlike to the manners and cuſtoms of France. In this ſtate of ſuſpenſe, he wrote to Lelius to conſult him, and to know whether he propoſed continuing at Rome.

"I WAIT,

"I WAIT, says he, your answer with impatience; if you advise me not to go there, I will seek a port between the Alps and the Appenines: should I find none, I will imitate those who having many years been voyagers on the ocean, will no more expose themselves to its tempests. I will behold only the Sorgia, and live and die with the peasants of Vaucluse. One thing only will concern me; to reflect that my resurrection will be so near Avignon, that Babylon of impiety."

LELIUS replied, he should not continue at Rome; and Petrarch went to Avignon the 26th of April, to take leave of his patrons and his friends. He learned there that the grand Senechal of Naples had lost his son, who was the most accomplished young man of that age. His father, though he had the greatest tenderness for him, supported this affliction with firmness, and an entire resigna-

tion

tion to the will of God. His body was carried with the pomp of royalty to the Carthuſian monaſtery near Florence. The removing it thither coſt five thouſand florins. The city of Florence rendered him the greateſt honours.

PETRARCH wrote to Zenobi, deſiring he would expreſs to the grand Senechal the intereſt he took in his affliction. "I came here, ſays he, the day before yeſterday, to take my final leave of this place. The people I have ſent to Italy, give me hopes I ſhall meet there with the retreat I wiſh. I ſhall leave this tempeſtuous country, never to return to it more."

"I AM going to paſs eight days at Vaucluſe, to prepare for my departure."

PETRARCH went from Avignon without ſeeing the Pope. The Cardinal of Taillerand uſed every argument in vain,

to

to engage him to fulfil this duty. The reaſon he gave for his refuſal, was this: "I feared I might infect him by my ſorceries, or that he ſhould infect me by his credulity."

BOOK V.

PETRARCH departed from Vaucluſe at the beginning of May, 1353, and took the rout of Mount Genevre to go into Italy. When he had paſſed that mountain and was in ſight of his country, he cried out in an extaſy, "I ſalute you, holy land! dear to God and good men! I am come back to you after a long exile, never to quit you more, in the hope you will procure me an agreeable aſylum while I live, and a little earth to cover me when I am dead. With what joy do I return to the embraces of my dear parent, and leave behind me the clouds and the fogs, to breathe this ſerene air!"

As he paſſed through Milan, he thought it neceſſary to pay his homage to John Viſcomti, who, we have before ſeen, was

both king and prieſt there. This prince loved men of letters, and gave Petrarch the moſt diſtinguiſhed reception; deſigning to fix him in his court. He took me affectionately by the hand, ſays Petrarch, and converſed with me on the place of my abode, introducing by degrees his deſire I would ſettle at Milan. I am not ignorant, ſaid he, of your objections to cities, and your taſte for ſolitude; I promiſe you that you ſhall enjoy it, even in the boſom of Milan. You ſhall be troubled with no employment: I aſk only your preſence to do honour to my perſon, and to be the ornament of my court. Petrarch could not reſiſt ſuch marks of favour: overwhelmed with the goodneſs, and ſtruck with the majeſty of this prince, which impreſſed all who beheld him, he was ſilent. At laſt he conſented on theſe two conditions: the one, that they ſhould give him a ſituation as retired as poſſible; the other, that he ſhould

not

not be obliged in any way to alter his manner of life?

The Archbiſhop very readily granted theſe requeſts.

The houſe choſen for him was at the end of the town, on the weſt ſide, near the gate of Verceil, and cloſe to the magnificent church of St. Ambroſe. The air on this ſpot was very good. At the entrance there were two handſome towers; in front the battlements of the church; and behind, the walls of the city, and a fine view of a rich country beyond them, extending even to the Alps; he remarked that though it was the middle of ſummer they were covered with ſnow. What a joy for Petrarch to live near a church dedicated to his favourite ſaint, of whom St. Auguſtine had atteſted ſo many miracles? He never entered this temple without feeling an extraordinary fervour. There was a ſtatue of St.

Ambroſe, ſaid to reſemble him perfectly; and which appeared alive. Petrarch was never weary of beholding it: "It was a moſt agreeable object, ſays he. This great Archbiſhop appeared to give me his bleſſing. What majeſty in his countenance! What ſweetneſs and expreſſion in his eyes! This ſight ſpread over my heart a lively and inexpreſſible tranquillity; I rejoiced that I came to Milan." Petrarch's houſe was alſo near a little chapel where St. Ambroſe and St. Auguſtine ſung together that ſacred Te Deum, from them ſpread through all the Italian churches; and it was alſo near the garden where St. Auguſtine was converted. Theſe circumſtances rendered Milan a delightful ſituation to Petrarch.

His friends, however, thought in a different manner. Socrates, Gui Settimo, Philip de Cabaſſole, ſaid one to the other, "What! This proud republican! who deſired nothing but liberty and indepen-

dence!

dance! This untamed animal, who ſtarted at the ſhadow of a yoke, and refuſed the firſt offices in Rome, becauſe he would not wear chains, though of gold! This miſanthrope, who could live no where but in the ſilence of the country! This preacher up of ſolitude, is he ſettled in a noiſy and turbulent city?" At Florence, Boccace and his other friends could not imagine that a man ſo zealous for the liberty of his country, ſhould live under a tyrant who was endeavouring to ſubdue it. The Prior of the Holy Apoſtles thought as they did; but he idolized Petrarch, and would not condemn him as his other friends had done; he wrote to him theſe few lines:

"YOUR friends have been a little ſharp upon you, and have wrote their ſentiments freely, as you always deſire them. You are no doubt of the opinion of Socrates, who ſaid, it is good to have cen-

ſurers; if what they ſay is true, to correct the fault; if not, it does no harm. You aſk me what I think? I am in ſome things, but not wholly of their opinion. Follow the courſe of fortune: nothing is more painful and embarraſſing than to have a great reputation to preſerve. It is not juſt, that a man whom philoſophy has made free, ſhould become the ſlave of others. Do what you like without conſtraint, and may you long enjoy that liberty." Petrarch, in a letter to his friends, ſpeaks thus in his own juſtification: "You are in the right; I lay down my arms, and have no defence to make. Man has not a greater enemy than himſelf. St. Chryſoſtom has written a fine treatiſe to prove, that no one can juſtly offend us, but ourſelves. I have acted againſt my ſentiments. We paſs our lives in doing what we ought not; and in leaving undone what we ought to do."

In another letter he ſays:

"The

"The public condemn without hearing me, or viewing the reaſons of my conduct. It was not poſſible for me to reſiſt the entreaties of this great man. The requeſts of princes have more force than their commands. Laberius ſaid of Julius Cæſar, 'How can I refuſe any thing to that man, who has been refuſed nothing by the gods?' We cannot act ſo as to pleaſe all the world; as the fable of the miller, his aſs and ſon, is a proof."

There arrived at Milan this year Cardinal Albornos, legate from the Pope, who meant to ſubdue the tyrants in Italy who had uſurped an unjuſt power. This Pope had great treaſures, and ſoon raiſed an army, and choſe for his general this Cardinal, who was nobly deſcended: on his father's ſide, from Alphonſo V. king of Leon; and on his mother's, from James king of Arragon. He was made, when very young, Archbiſhop of Toledo; and was in the camp of Alphonſo the XIth, in

his war againſt the Moors, and fought by his ſide. Alphonſo dying in 1350, juſt as he was going to drive the Moors out of Spain; Albornos went to Avignon, and Clement the VIth made him a Cardinal. When he returned to Spain, he found that kingdom deſolated by the cruelties of Don Pedro, the ſon of Alphonſo, who, inflamed with a violent paſſion for Mary Padilla, treated Blanche of Bourbon, his wife, with the utmoſt contempt, and put all thoſe to death who oppoſed his meaſures. Albornos ſpoke and wrote to him with a freedom truly apoſtolic, which was ſo ill received by this blinded prince, that the Cardinal retired to Avignon in 1353.

When Innocent caſt his eyes on him to execute his project in Italy, all the world agreed he could not have made a better choice, as beſides his knowledge in the military art, Albornos had other great qualities. He was well acquainted with

with the human heart, and knew how to avail himſelf of the foibles of men to compaſs his ends. He had a mind capable of forming great deſigns, and of executing them with ſurpriſing celerity; and with all this, a patience that could wait the favourable moment for their ripening, when that was neceſſary to their ſucceſs. Modeſt when a victor, he opened his arms to a ſubmiſſive enemy: full of reſources and expedients, he knew how to make advantage of the reverſes of fortune: affable, though firm, he united an amiable ſweetneſs with a juſt ſeverity. Innocent the VIth, who knew him well, opened to him his treaſures, and confided to him his ſpiritual and temporal authority.

The Legate ſet out with the Pope's letters to the lords of Italy, traverſed the Alps, and arrived at Milan in September. This enterpriſe did not pleaſe John Viſcomti, who held a ſecret union with the

uſurpers, and feared he muſt give up Bologna, which he held only from a treaty with the former Pope. Things were now changed, and women no longer governed. Innocent, of an auſtere temper, and determined on reformation, purſued a very different plan from his predeceſſor. The Legate was however received at Milan with infinite reſpect and ſubmiſſion, agreeable to the policy of its prince. His expences, and thoſe of his numerous train, were defrayed; and he was treated with all poſſible magnificence. John Viſcomti, with his two nephews, went to meet him two miles from the city, attended by an immenſe concourſe of people, expreſſing the greateſt joy! Petrarch was with the Viſcomtis on this occaſion, and in the violence of the crowd, his horſe ſlipping with his hind legs into a ditch, he would have been cruſhed had he fallen: but Galeas Viſcomti diſmounting, ſaved him from this imminent danger.

The Legate treated Petrarch, who little expected it, with the utmoſt diſtinction; and after granting all he aſked for his friends, preſſed him to aſk ſomething worthy his own acceptance. Petrarch replied, "When I aſk for my friends, is it not the ſame as for myſelf? Have I not the higheſt ſatisfaction in obtaining favours for them? I have long put a rein on my own deſires; of what then can I ſtand in need?"

After the departure of the Legate, Petrarch went into the country, to unbend his mind from the fatigues it had undergone; from whence, ſome time after, he wrote this letter to a friend:

"You have heard how much my peace has been diſturbed, and my leiſure broken in upon, by an importunate crowd and unforeſeen occupations. The Legate has left Milan; and was received at Florence with general applauſe; and I am again

in my retreat: I have been long free, happy, and maſter of my time, but I feel at preſent that liberty and leiſure are only for ſouls of conſummate virtue. Alas, that is not my ſtate. Nothing is more dangerous for a heart ſubject to the paſſions than to be free, idle and alone. The ſnares of voluptuouſneſs are then more dangerous, and corrupt thoughts gain an eaſier entrance: above all love, that ſeducing tormentor, from whom I concluded I had nothing more to fear. I ſhall conſult a faithful phyſician, and ſuffer with patience the rudeſt applications of his ſkilful hand to remove every lurking diſeaſe." Petrarch doubtleſs refers here to his old paſſion for Laura, reviving in ſolitude, and not a new attachment.

Soon after the departure of the Legate, there arrived news at Milan, that the fleet of the Genoeſe was entirely deſtroyed by the Venetians and Catalonians, near

near the iſland of Sardinia. The courier that brought this news to Milan gave a moving account of the ſtate of the Genoeſe. Not a family in it but had loſt ſome relation. A great part of the nobility periſhed: nothing but cries and groans were heard in the ſtreets. Petrarch was going to write to conſole and re-animate them, but he was told they were driven to deſpair. He trembled at this news, and flung down his pen.

"Cities, ſays he, and the world itſelf, have their old age, and like men they tend onward to deſtruction. Salluſt with reaſon ſays, that all that riſes ſets, and every thing which grows decays." John Viſcomti had views on Genoa, which was a port conveniently ſituated for him. He inveſted it on all ſides by land, and the enemies blocked it up by ſea; ſo that they were reduced to famine. His partiſans inſinuated to the Genoeſe, that they had no other remedy but to put

themſelves under the protection of this lord. The Genoeſe did not long deliberate; they ſent a ſolemn deputation to John Viſcomti. There was a decent and even reſpectable grief, ſays Petrarch, in theſe meſſengers. Statius ſays, there is even dignity in the unhappy.

JOHN VISCOMTI convened his counſellors: Petrarch was one of them. The chief of the deputation ſpoke and ſaid, "We come by order of the people of Genoa, to offer you the city of Genoa, its inhabitants, their ſea, and their land, their goods, their hopes and eſtates, and every thing that belongs to them, both ſacred and profane, from Corvo to Monaco, on certain conditions that ſhall be agreed on. The prince anſwered, that he knew the difficulties of the enterprize, but depending on divine more than human aid, he would accept their propoſals. That he would engage to protect them, and to render juſtice to all the

world: and that, not to extend his dominion, but out of compaſſion to an oppreſſed people. He concluded by beſeeching God and all the ſaints to ſucceed his deſigns. Petrarch was deſired to prepare an anſwer, but he excuſed himſelf on the ſhortneſs of the time aſſigned for compoſing it.

The event juſtified the ſtep they had taken. The city changed its appearance the moment the Archbiſhop took poſſeſſion: plenty was reſtored; and after depoſing the Doge, he took the reins of government into his own hands. He gave them money to arm their gallies, and renew their commerce: he had the road widened from Genoa to Nice, which alarmed the people of Provence, ſo much was his power dreaded even out of Italy. Among other improvements, he gave a clock to the city, a great curioſity in this age.

Petrarch, fatigued with the tumults of

of the city, went a little tour to the caſtle of Colomban, built by the emperor Barbaroſſa, in his journey to Italy, 1164. It belongs now to the Carthuſians. He thus deſcribes it:

"THIS famous caſtle, fortified by nature and art, is ſituated on a rich hill, at the bottom of which runs the Lambro, a ſmall but clear river, which waſhes the town of Monca, and then falls into the Po. Towards the Weſt, there is a view of Pavia, Placentia, Cremona: to the North, the Alps, which ſeparate Italy from Germany, which are always covered with ſnow. The Appennine, and its numberleſs cities, are to the South: and the Po, taking an immenſe courſe, winds its ſtream along, and fertiliſes this beautiful country."

PETRARCH could not view this ſpot, without recalling the idea of his beloved ſolitude at Vaucluſe. He had juſt received a let-

a letter from Socrates, who informed him he was there with Gui Settimo, The latter was to have accompanied Petrarch into Italy, but was prevented by ſickneſs; and when he recovered, the heats were too violent to attempt it. Petrarch wrote to him, to expreſs his regret that he was not there to do the honours of his little houſe. "You are now, ſays he, in the temple of peace, and the aſylum of repoſe. If you take my advice, you will often come thither to relieve yourſelf from the fatigues and buſtles of a court. Make uſe of my books, who weep for the abſence of their maſter, and the death of their guardian. My garden implores your care, and that of Socrates, to comfort it for my abſence, and to keep it in repair. Plant ſome trees, that ſhall be a ſhade to us in old age, which we will paſs there together, if the deſtinies ſhall permit. My houſe is yours: my little bed will not miſs its maſter, if you vouchſafe to ſleep in it." This letter he

formed

formed on that delightful mountain ſeated on the lawn, under the ſhade of a cheſnut, and wrote it in the caſtle, where he ſlept that night. They prepared for him a magnificent chamber, and a bed which was not, ſays he, the bed of a poet or a philoſopher.

PETRARCH, when he called Vaucluſe the temple of peace, did not foreſee the diſaſter that happened ſoon after. A band of robbers who had committed many robberies in that part of the country, went to Petrarch's houſe, which they ſat on fire, and took every thing they could find. An old arch ſtopped the rage of the flames. The ſon of the fiſherman who had feared this, and was now its keeper, had carried to the caſtle ſome books, Petrarch had left behind him. The thieves imagining it was well defended, dared not attack it. Heaven would not permit ſo invaluable a treaſure

ſure, ſays Petrarch, to fall into ſuch vile hands.

Petrarch found on his return to Milan, a letter from the emperor, in which he gives many political reaſons for not coming ſooner to the aſſiſtance of Italy. "You have read, ſays he, the anſwer of Auguſtus in the happieſt years of Rome, to thoſe who offered him the ſceptre. 'You know not the burden of empire:' we who are charged with it feel this truth. It is love for mankind alone that can ſurmount the difficulties of government. Viewing the diſorders of Rome and Italy, we have reſolved, notwithſtanding our own weak condition, to lend our aid: but it appeared as a capital diſeaſe to deſerve a very attentive examination. Friend, we muſt compare the preſent with the paſt, to re-eſtabliſh the luſtre of the one, and to purge the infamy of the other. But phyſicians have agreed, and Cæſars have proved, that

that before we employ inſtruments, every method ſhould be tried. We adviſe, therefore, and wait for ſuccours, that we may do nothing unworthy or unbecoming of an Emperor. We wiſh to diſcourſe with you, who hold ſo high a rank on Parnaſſus; and we look upon you as one of our moſt faithful ſubjects.

As this letter was long in coming, Petrarch begins his anſwer with a pleaſantry. "I find, ſays he, it is as difficult for your couriers and diſpatches to paſs the Alps, as your perſons and your legions." He had preſſed the Emperor ſome time before this, to come immediately into Italy, and take poſſeſſion of the empire. "I hoped, adds he, I had perſuaded you; but I perceive my error. You think differently from me, and will be believed; for you hold the reins of the earth, and the helm of the ſea. What conſoles me is, that though you do not adopt my opinion, you will approve my

zeal;

zeal; and I cannot receive a greater recompenſe than this."

In this anſwer, he ſpeaks thus concerning Rienzi: "How much eaſier is it for you to re-eſtabliſh the empire of Rome, than it was for Romulus to lay its foundation on the rocks, in the midſt of thoſe nations who oppoſed him; or for Cæſar to become maſter of this empire, at the time when its republic was moſt flouriſhing! As a proof of this, behold the man who roſe up in its moſt declining period; and though neither king, conſul, nor patrician; nay, ſcarcely known as a Roman citizen; neither diſtinguiſhed by the titles of his anceſtors, nor by his own virtues, yet dared to declare himſelf the reſtorer of the public liberty. What title could be more ſplendid for a private man? Tuſcany ſubmitted to him immediately: Italy followed her example: Europe, and the whole world, were ſet in motion. We have ſeen this; it is

not a thing that we only read of in hiſtory. Juſtice, peace, faith, and ſafety returned; and the traces of the golden age began to appear upon earth. In the moſt brilliant moment of ſucceſs, he gave up his enterpriſe. I accuſe no one; I will neither condemn, nor abſolve. This man took the leaſt title in Rome. *If the name of Tribune could produce ſuch an effect, what cannot be done with the title of Cæſar?*"

1354. Soon after this, a league was formed by the lords of Padua, Modena, Mantua, and Venice, with the Emperor, who was to be crowned at Rome. This confederacy alarmed John Viſcomti, and he ſent to invite the Emperor to come and receive the crown at Milan, and he choſe Petrarch for this embaſſy. He wiſhed for repoſe, and did not care to traverſe the mountains in winter, but he could not reſiſt the inſinuating manners of this prince. Before he ſet out on this em-

baſſy, he received the preſent of a Greek Homer, from the Proctor of Romania, whom he knew at Avignon, when ſent there by the Emperor of Conſtantinople, to negociate the union of the Greek and Latin churches. He was a man of merit and genius; and the preſent he made to Petrarch was rare; there was not one beſides this in Italy; they had only the bad tranſlation of Homer by Pindar in Latin verſe.

Petrarch acknowledged the favour in the following lines:

"You could not have made a preſent more agreeable to me, or more noble and worthy of you; why am I not able to add alſo, as well deſerved by me? Could you have joined yourſelf with it to ſerve me as a guide, it would have been ineſtimable. But I loſt the two ears through which I underſtood Homer; the one by death, the other by abſence. The Ho-

mer you have ſent is, however, dear to me; and ſtill more ſo, becauſe it is the pure original emanations from his celeſtial mind. *Macrobius* calls this poet the ſource of all imagination. I embrace this divine author, and return you a thouſand thanks for having adorned my houſe with this king of poets, and prince of philoſophers."

"I SHALL be proud of two ſuch gueſts as Homer and Plato in their own habit, and I deſpair not of underſtanding them more perfectly hereafter; Cato was older than I am, when he began to learn Greek. Command me, if I can ſerve you in any thing; and grant me ſome opportunity of repaying the many debts I owe you. Succeſs, they ſay, inſpires confidence; I find it ſo; and dare yet beg you to ſend me, at your convenience, Heſiod and Euripides. I know not why my name is more ſpoken of in the Weſt, than it ought to be: if you judge it proper,

make it known in the Eaſt; that by your means, the Emperor of Conſtantinople may not diſdain the man who has been honoured by the Emperor of Rome."

John Cantacuzene was at this time Emperor of Conſtantinople, and he merited ſuch a compliment from Petrarch. He was a man of genius and letters, and has left us a well-written hiſtory of what paſſed under his own reign, and that of Andronicus Paleologus his predeceſſor.

A few days after this, Petrarch went on his embaſſy; one great point of which was to treat with the Venetians: but notwithſtanding his eloquence and his friendſhip with the Doge, he could not ſucceed. The conſequence was, that the Genoeſe, by the aſſiſtance of John Viſcomti, armed twenty-three galleys, with which they made great havock in a deſcent on the Venetian coaſt, who thought themſelves ſecure from all attack. This news ſpread

horror and diſmay: Andrew Dondolo took every meaſure that wiſdom could ſuggeſt at this juncture: but his precautions were ineffectual. The ſhock this ſurpriſe gave him, impaired his health; he langniſhed from this time, and died the 8th of September 1354, extremely regretted by all.

"He was, ſays Petrarch, a man of virtue and integrity, full of love and zeal for the republic: wiſe, eloquent, prudent, kind and affable. He had but one fault, he loved war, and it was not ſuited to his character or manners: I ſpoke and wrote to him on this ſubject with the greateſt freedom: he had the goodneſs to receive it kindly, for he knew my heart; but the confidence he was inſpired with from his laſt victory againſt the Genoeſe, cauſed him to reject my advice. He judged of the goodneſs of a cauſe by the event; and often repeated to me what Scipio ſaid to Hannibal, and Lucan puts into the mouth

mouth of Cæsar: 'the success of this army shall prove the justice of its cause, the vanquished shall be the guilty side.' Fortune conferred a favour on this prince in the death it sent him, for had he lived a little longer, he would have seen the total ruin of his country; over whom the Genoese gained, soon after this, a compleat victory."

In October 1354, Petrarch lost a friend, whose bounty and favour towards him had sincerely attached his heart; this was John Viscomti. He had a small lump on his forehead, just above his eye-brow; he had it cut off, and died in the night, without having time to receive the Sacraments. Petrarch speaks favourably of this great man; in which he agrees with most contemporary historians. Except Villani, they all allow that John Viscomti treated his subjects with great humanity, that he distributed justice with exactness, and was very charitable to the poor. It

is owned he was ambitious, and every thing he did was accompanied with dignity. His name was renowned in the moſt diſtant countries; and reſpected even by the Turks. He was formed to pleaſe the fair ſex, for he was handſome, gay, generous and courageous, but his great paſſion was ambition; and he was feared throughout Italy. It is reported, however, that when the Romans would have yielded to his authority, he refuſed them, ſaying, Rome belongs to the Pope, and to the Emperor. He was interred in the great church of Milan, where his Mauſoleum remains with this epitaph:

"PASSENGER, wouldſt thou know the nothingneſs of all human power and grandeur; learn what I was, and behold what I am. I had immenſe treaſures, vaſt palaces, ſuperb cities: my name alone made all Italy tremble. Of what uſe is all this to me now? Behold me

ſhut

ſhut up within a ſtone, and devoured by worms."

John Viscomti had three nephews, who were his heirs, and took poſſeſſion of his eſtates, without the leaſt contention, on the day marked for that purpoſe by an aſtrologer, without whoſe art nothing of any importance was undertaken in this age. Petrarch was deſired to addreſs the people convoked to this ceremony. In the middle of his harangue the aſtrologer cried out, the moment was come and it would be dangerous to let it paſs. Petrarch, though he had the greateſt contempt for this ſuperſtitious ſcience, gave way to their prejudices, and ſtopped directly. The aſtrologer, aſtoniſhed at it, ſaid to him, there is yet one moment more you may go on. I have nothing more to ſay, replied Petrarch: and I know no tale with which I can amuſe the aſſembly. The aſtrologer was diſconcerted and rubbed his forehead, while ſome of the auditors

auditors were laughing; and others wondering at his aſſurance; when he cried out again, the happy inſtant is come: on which an old officer carried three white ſtakes like the paliſades of a town, and gave one to each of the three brothers, which finiſhed the ceremony.

"THE aſtrologer, ſays *Petrarch*, was elder and wiſer than me; I loved, and ſhould have been ſtill more attached to him, if he had not been an aſtrologer. I ſometimes joked and ſometimes reproached him for this profeſſion. One day when I had been ſharper with him than uſual, he replied with a ſigh, Friend, you are in the right; I think as you do; but I have a wife and children! This anſwer touched me ſo much, that I never ſpoke again to him on that ſubject."

THERE was a great difference in the character of the three Viſcomtis. Matthew the eldeſt hated buſineſs, and led an idle drunken

drunken life; all his pleaſure was hawking, and every amuſement which women could partake of. It is recorded in the annals of the church, that he paſſed the days and nights in continual debauchery; always ſurrounded by the infamous part of the ſex.

Barnabas, the ſecond brother, was cruel and moroſe, breathing nothing but war and ſlaughter, the exerciſe of which, added to his natural ferocity, made him afterwards a monſter of tyranny and cruelty. He married the daughter of Martin de Leſcale, who was called the Queen from the great airs ſhe put on, and her love of pomp and oſtentation. She lay-in this year of a boy, and did Petrarch the honour to chuſe him for its godfather. He called him Mark, gave him a cup of gold, and made a Latin poem on the occaſion, in which he celebrated all the great men who had borne that name.

Galeas

GALEAS, the younger brother, had great ſweetneſs of temper and goodneſs of mind: he loved hunting, but only as an amuſement. He made war with courage and judgment, but he preferred peace: handſome, well made, and agreeable, he pleaſed and he loved the fair ſex, but he kept this affection within bounds. He idolized Petrarch, and engaged him to continue at Milan. Petrarch attached himſelf ſincerely to this Prince, whom he ſpeaks of in the higheſt manner.

THESE brothers perceived of what conſequence it was to be firmly united againſt the league that threatened them, headed by the Emperor. Barnabas was charged with the military affairs; all the reſt lay upon Galeas. Matthew, or the eldeſt, preſided over all in name, but did not interfere in any thing. They did nothing of any importance without conſulting Petrarch, and this confidence retained him at Milan.

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The deaths of the Doge of Venice and John Viſcomti, were followed by that of Rienzi, whoſe tragic end we will briefly relate. He continued in priſon during the life of Clement. Innocent viewed Rienzi in a different light from his predeceſſor, who had ſuffered him to live, but thought his madneſs required confinement. Rome was at this time in a worſe ſtate than ever: it was a ſcene of violence and bloodſhed. The Pope ſent Rienzi to Cardinal Albornos, with orders to the Cardinal to re-eſtabliſh him at Rome when he ſaw a convenient opportunity; and wrote theſe lines with him.

"As a remedy for the evils of Rome, we have ſent our dear ſon, Nicholas Rienzi, a Roman Chevalier, in the hope that being enlightened by adverſity, he will renounce all his fantaſtic viſions, and employ the great talents God has given him to ſuppreſs the wicked, and to eſtabliſh peace. We have abſolved him from the

cenſure

cenſure and puniſhment he was under, and ſend him to you freed from all bonds."

CARDINAL ALBORNOS, who knew mankind better than the Pope, thought differently of Rienzi, and made no great haſte to re-eſtabliſh him. Francis Baroncelli, the writer for the ſenate, took it into his head to ſet himſelf in Rienzi's place without his eloquence and talents. But this novelty laſted only four months. He abandoned himſelf to exceſs and cruelty, and was maſſacred; after which the people ſubmitted to the Legate.

RIENZI being thus ſet aſide, deſired leave to go to Rome, which the Cardinal granted, giving him the letters patent from the Pope. Thus eſtabliſhed ſenator he obliged the nobility to take the oath of fidelity; the ſucceſſor of the Colonna's, ſhut up in his palace at Paleſtrina, a place of ſuch ſtrength that it required an army to beſiege it, refuſed; and braved his deputies to the very gates of Rome.

Rome. Rienzi had no money to raiſe houſes, but the Chevalier de Montrial, the chief of the banditti who infeſted the country round, coming to Rome to ſee his brothers; Rienzi had him ſtopped and beheaded, and ſeized a part of the treaſures he had amaſſed: the people were diſpleaſed at this, but much more ſo when he put to death Pandolf a good man loved and reſpected by all. They roſe up againſt Rienzi. Abandoned by every one, he put on his armour and came on the balcony, where he uſed to harangue, making ſigns to be heard, and crying out, Long live the people; but finding all in vain, he ordered the doors of the capitol to be thrown open, hoping to ſave himſelf during the pillage. He blackened his face, put on the habit of a peaſant, and throwing a pillow over his head which covered his face, he ran down the ſtairs crying out; aſcend! aſcend! there is good ſpoil. Some one, who knew his voice, ſnatched off the pillow, ſaying "ſtop! whither

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art thou running." His bracelets of gold, which he had forgot to take off, betrayed him. They brought him to the place where he had paſſed ſo many ſentences of death. In this ridiculous diſguiſe he was an hour expoſed to the rabble, without ſaying a word, or being inſulted by any one: ſuch was the awe in which they ſtood of him! At laſt one of them plunged a poignard into his breaſt, and it was immediately followed by a thouſand others. Such was the end of this mad Tribune!

It does not appear from the writings of Petrarch that he had the leaſt connection with, or concern in Rienzi's re-eſtabliſhment; he was wholly engaged at preſent with the arrival of the Emperor, who was expected every day in Italy. He came to Mantua in October, after having been at Padua, where he was magnificently received. From Mantua he wrote to Petrarch, to invite him to come there, and expreſſed an extreme deſire to

ſee

ſee him. Petrarch delighted with ſo flattering a diſtinction, was not ſtopped by the extreme bad weather. It froze ſo hard, that they ſaid the Emperor had brought with him the German froſts. The old men in Italy declared they had never felt ſuch ſevere cold; the roads were like glaſs. The horſes, though froſt-ſhod, could ſcarcely keep on their feet. Happily there fell a great quantity of ſnow, which made the roads paſſable. Petrarch ſet out in ſo thick a fog, he could not diſtinguiſh one object around. Some armed ſoldiers came now and then out of their ambuſcades. They alarmed, but did me no hurt, ſays he, as they belonged to the Lords of Milan. The firſt night he was obliged to ſtop on the banks of the river Chioſi, it being too late to paſs over it. The next day he would ſet out before ſun-riſe: his attendants murmured at being expoſed to ſo violent a cold, which could hardly be ſupported even in bed. As he came out

of the inn he ſaw the Emperor's meſſenger: he came that night from Cremonia; his people were frozen and could not move a ſtep farther: "as to himſelf, ſays Petrarch, he had the air of a man who is walking by moon-light in a fine ſummer's night." Never was there a body more hardened to fatigue, or leſs ſenſible of the injuries of the weather. Petrarch with all his diligence was four days upon the road. The Emperor expreſſed his obligation to him for coming in ſuch weather, and told him he had ſeldom felt ſo ſharp a froſt in Germany. Petrarch anſwered, that Providence would inure the Germans by degrees to the climate of Italy. He thus relates his reception and diſcourſe with this prince. "The Emperor received me with ſuch kind and eaſy manners, as had neither the appearance of imperial pomp, nor German formality; he lived with me as with his equal. We paſſed ſometimes whole days in diſcourſing, from the break of day till

night,

night, as if he had no other employment: he ſpoke to me of my works, and expreſſed a great deſire to ſee them, above all, that which treats of illuſtrious men. I told him that I required leiſure and repoſe to finiſh this work; he gave me to underſtand he wiſhed it to appear with his name: I replied with that freedom with which nature endued me, and which cuſtom has confirmed, and years have ſtrengthened; Great Prince! there requires for this, only virtue on your part, and leiſure on mine."

"He deſired me to explain myſelf; and I ſaid, time is neceſſary for a work of this kind, in which I propoſe to inſert great things in a little ſpace. On your ſide you muſt labour to merit your name at the head of my book. It is not ſufficient for that, to wear a crown, or bear a ſuperior title; your virtue and great actions muſt rank you among thoſe famous men whoſe characters will be

ſketched out in this work. Live in ſuch a manner, that after having read the lives of your illuſtrious predeceſſors, you ſhall deſerve that yours alſo ſhould be read by poſterity."

"THE Emperor ſhewed by a ſmile and a ſerene countenance, that my liberty had not diſpleaſed him. I took this occaſion to preſent him with ſome medals of Emperors in gold and ſilver, which were my delight. In the collection there was one of Auguſtus in high preſervation; he appeared alive! Here, ſaid I, are the great men whoſe place you occupy, and who ought to ſerve you as examples. Theſe medals are dear to me, I ſhould not have given them to any other, but they are your's by right." I then gave him an abſtract of their lives, with a word here and there to excite his imitation of them; he ſeemed to liſten to me with pleaſure, and ſaid he had never received ſo agreeable a preſent. I ſhould never end was I to

give

give an account of all the converſations I had with this Prince. He deſired me one day to relate my hiſtory from infancy; I made every poſſible excuſe, but he would be obeyed: he was very attentive, and if I omitted any thing from forgetfulneſs, or the fear of tiring out his patience, he reminded me of it. I was aſtoniſhed to find him better informed than myſelf of the minuteſt circumſtances of my life." [It will be, no doubt, recollected, that this was the Prince who on a viſit to the Pope with his father, then Emperor, ſelected Laura from the ladies around her, to pay her the moſt particular marks of reſpect and attention.]

"After this the Emperor aſked me what were my projects and my future plan of life? My will is good, ſaid I, but habit prevails over it. I am like the ſea, buffeted by contrary winds. I underſtand you, ſaid he, but you do not anſwer my queſtion: What kind of life

would be moſt agreeable, and that you would prefer to all others? A life of ſolitude, I replied without heſitation; there is none more ſure, more tranquil, more agreeable, or which ſuits me ſo well. If I am able I will ſeek it at its ſource; that is to ſay, in woods and in mountains, as I have already done: if not, I will try to enjoy it even in the midſt of cities. This, ſaid he ſmiling, is what I wiſhed to bring you to, and that you ſhould own an error I would undertake to combat, though I am partly of your way of thinking. Take care, replied I, you will not fight with equal weapons; I know the vulgar think differently on this head, but I have the greateſt of authorities on my ſide, beſide experience, that it becomes not a Prince like you to think as the vulgar; and I would even take the inhabitants of cities themſelves for my judges in this cauſe. I have juſt written a little treatiſe on this ſubject: I know it, returned the Emperor with vivacity; and

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if I find that book I will throw it into the fire. I muſt then take care, replied I, it never falls into your hands."

"We had long and frequent diſputes of this ſort, always ſeaſoned with the ſalt of good humour; and I muſt confeſs that the Emperor combated my ſolitary ſyſtem with ſurprizing energy, and boaſted he had gained the victory. He begged of me to accompany him to Rome: "It is not ſufficient for me, ſaid he, to ſee that celebrated city with my own eyes; I wiſh to ſee it through yours, which are ſo much clearer than mine; I ſhall want you alſo in ſome of the cities of Tuſcany. Rome and Cæſar, theſe are indeed my idols, I replied, and it would have delighted me to go to Rome with Cæſar, but many obſtacles oppoſe: and this was a new ſubject of diſpute till we ſeparated. He uſed every obliging perſuaſion; and I may well boaſt that Dionyſius the ty-

rant, was not kinder to Plato, than Cæſar was to me."

1355. THIS pacific prince, who came into Italy entirely to make peace, negotiated one with the Viſcomti's in particular, who had thirty thouſand troops in good order. They made the Emperor preſents, but exacted that he ſhould not enter Milan; and that the troops that followed him ſhould be diſarmed. Charles had the weakneſs to ſubmit to theſe conditions: his love of peace prevailed over every other conſideration. The Viſcomti's ordered that his expences ſhould be defrayed while in their territories, and that of his three thouſand diſarmed cavaliers; commanding none of their ſubjects to receive any payment or reward. Galeas Viſcomti came out to meet him, and conducted him to the palace deſtined for him. The next day the Emperor went to the Abbe of Chioravalle, where dinner was prepared for him, and where Barnabas preſented him,

him, on his own part and on his brothers, with thirty fine horſes, richly harneſſed. When they came to the gates of Milan, the Emperor invited by the two brothers to enter, anſwered, that could not be, for he would keep the word he had given. The Viſcomti's politely told him that it was a favour they had aſked, becauſe they ſuppoſed the troops of the confederate lords would attend him; but that ſuch a precaution could never regard his perſon, whoſe preſence would do them great honour; and that if he judged it neceſſary, they would abſolve him of the promiſe he had made. The Emperor inſiſted no farther, and entered with them the fourth of January, 1355. He was received with drums, trumpets, and other inſtruments, which made ſo loud a noiſe, that had Heaven thundered, he could not, ſays Petrarch, have been heard: it was more like a tumult than a feaſt. They gave the Prince and his attendants a palace magnificently furniſhed, and every thing he could deſire.

deſire. The three brothers then paid homage to him, and declared they held all they poſſeſſed from his authority, and would only employ it in his ſervice.

THE next day willing to give the Emperor a high idea of their power, they made a general review of all their troops, the cavalry and infantry, to which they joined ſome companies of citizens, well mounted and magnificently dreſſed to add to the parade; and they told him that beſides theſe their forts and caſtles were all furniſhed with good garriſons.

THE Emperor was not much at his eaſe in the midſt of ſo many troops, ſhut up in the city, and at the mercy of thoſe whom he had ſome reaſon to ſuſpect; however he put a good face on the matter, and appeared every where with a countenance which hid the feelings of his heart. Petrarch ſcarcely ever left him, and the Prince employed every moment

moment in converſing with him he could ſteal from public affairs, and theſe fatiguing ceremonies. He received the iron crown in the church of St. Ambroſe from the hands of Robert Viſcomti, Archbiſhop of Milan, in the preſence of the Patriarch of Aguilon, his brother, and a great number of lords and biſhops. In this ceremony the Emperor made Knights of John Galeas, ſon of Galeas Viſcomti, and Blanche of Savoy; and Mark ſon of Barnabas and his Queen; and two infants only two years old. The three brothers were declared Vicars of the Empire for all the eſtates they poſſeſſed in Italy. They gave to the Emperor fifty thouſand florins of gold, twelve horſes covered with a fine cloth lined with ermine, and ſix hundred ſoldiers to eſcort him to Rome. A biſhop had predicted that the eagle ſhould ſubmit to the viper, as the viper was painted on the Milaneſe ſtandards; this prophecy ſeemed to be verified. The Emperor looked upon

himſelf at Milan to be in a magnificent priſon; he got out of it as ſoon as he could, and his impatience cauſed him to loſe his imperial gravity. Villani ſays, that he ran through the ſtates of the Viſcomti's with the precipitation of a merchant who is going to a fair; and he did not fairly breathe till he was out of their dominions. Petrarch accompanied him five miles beyond Placentia; the Prince renewed his intreaties that he would go with him to Rome. Petrarch excuſed himſelf with all the civility poſſible, and with much difficulty obtained leave to depart. When they were bidding farewel, a Tuſcan Knight, in the train of the Emperor, took Petrarch by the hand, and turning to the Emperor, ſaid to him, This is the man of whom I have ſo often ſpoken to you; he will ſing your praiſe, if you deſerve it; but be aſſured he knows when to ſpeak and when to be ſilent. Such freedom of ſpeech did the Emperor indulge to thoſe who were attached to his perſon.

On his return to Milan, Petrarch deſired nothing ſo much as to go and enjoy in ſolitude the repoſe he had ſo long been deprived of; he compares his condition to that of a thirſty ſtag who ſtunned with the noiſe of the dogs, ſeeks the cool ſtream and the ſilent ſhade. In his retreat he reflected on the corrupt manners of the age he lived in: the exceſſes he witneſſed in the Germans who were in the Emperor's train, gave riſe to theſe ſoliloquies. Seneca ſays, every one complains of his own age.

At this time Lelius wrote a letter to Petrarch from Avignon, to inform him of his departure for Piſa and Rome, and to deſire a letter of recommendation from him to the Emperor. Petrarch immediately wrote this letter.

"Great Prince! your goodneſs emboldens me to preſent to you my other ſelf. The bearer of this letter to your foot-

ſtool is a Roman citizen, ennobled by birth, but ſtill more ennobled by his virtues. I ſhould never end was I to ſpeak of his prudence, his fidelity, his induſtry and eloquence, and I would rather you ſhould form an idea of him from your own judgment, which nothing eſcapes, and which cannot be deceived. If you honour me with ſo much confidence, be aſſured that he is a man worthy of your favour. Add to this that he has been always attached to your perſon, your friends, and your empire. Stephen Colonna, that renowned hero, whoſe zeal for the Emperor Henry VII. your royal grandfather, is known to all the world, loved Lelius as his ſon. Alas! that good old man ſighed for your arrival, as Simeon did for that of the Meſſiah; but death defrauded him of this pleaſure. His children cheriſhed Lelius as their brother, and John Colonna, his grand-ſon, looked upon him as his father. I remember to have ſeen you at

Avignon,

Avignon, leaning familiarly upon his ſhoulder, and careſſing him with the greateſt affection. Lelius poſſeſſed the confidence of all this noble family; after paſſing his infancy with one branch, and his youth with another, he conſecrated to them every moment of his life, and would have ended it with them, if death had not cut down almoſt at one ſtroke a family devoted to your ſervice. Imagine them all at your feet, beſeeching you to protect the man they loved and eſteemed, and whom they had as it were adopted."

"I will further add that Lelius was favoured with the good graces of Pope Clement, whom you reſpected as your father, and who loved you as a ſon; of the king of France, who is united to you by blood and by friendſhip; and of the Cardinal de Porto, who does honour to the purple by his birth and great qualities, and with whom you are alſo tenderly

united.

united. After ſo many great names, ſhall I preſume to add my own, and recommend him to you as my friend? behold how far zeal and attachment can heighten my confidence!"

It is not aſtoniſhing that ſuch a man as Petrarch deſcribes Lelius, and the bearer of a letter from him, ſhould be well received by the Emperor. This Prince treated him with the greateſt diſtinction, carried him to Rome with him, and vouchſafed to admit him into the moſt intimate friendſhip. The Emperor ſet out from Sienna in March with the Empreſs and all her train, and arrived at Rome on Holy Thurſday the ſecond of April. The two following days he viſited the churches in the habit of a pilgrim. On Eaſter Sunday he was crowned with the Empreſs, and in the ceremony he confirmed all the privileges of the Roman church, and all the promiſes he had made to the Popes

Clement

Clement and Innocent. When he came out of St. Peter's church, he went with a great retinue to St. John's of Lateran, where he dined, and in the evening went to ſleep at St. Laurent out of the walls, which was one of the promiſes he had given and faithfully adhered to. Some hiſtorians have ſaid the Romans offered to make him maſter of Rome, or deſired he would re-eſtabliſh it in its former ſtate. He replied he would think of it; but when he was out of the city, he anſwered, "It was not expedient to change the government ſo often, and that they ſhould recollect their oath to the Pope." The fall of the Emperors and riſe of the Popes may be placed at this period. Petrarch thought this promiſe of the Emperor's, not to ſleep in Rome, a very diſhonourable one. "The Emperor, ſays he, came only into Italy to be crowned. The ſucceſſor of St. Peter, who wears his tiara on the banks of the Rhone, with as much confidence as he would on the

banks of the Tiber, not only ſuffers but orders him to go out of Rome: that is to ſay, he permits him to bear the title of Emperor, and forbids him to diſcharge the offices that belong to it. With one hand he opens to him the temple where he is to receive the imperial crown, and with the other he ſhuts on him the door of the city, which is the capital and ſeat of the empire! What a contradiction is this!"

NERI MORANDI, a friend of Petrarch's, going to Rome with the Emperor, had aſked of Petrarch letters of recommendation: he gave him one to his friend Paul Annibaldi. Paul had a ſon in the flower of his age, who was a youth of great hopes; he happened juſt at this time to be killed in a fray, and his enemies committed all ſorts of inſults on his body. The father who beheld the ſight was ſtruck with ſuch horror that he fell dead upon the ſpot. "I believed, ſaid Petrarch,

trarch, that the loſs of ſo many friends, and the total extinction of the houſe of Colonna, had exhauſted all my tears, but I have found ſome to ſhed for a man who had acquired my friendſhip by his virtues."

The Emperor returned to Sienna in April, where he had great conferences with Cardinal Albornos, and gave him troops to reduce the tyrants of Romania; from thence he went to Piſa, where was Zanobi de Strata, the friend of Petrarch, and of the grand Senechal of Naples.

Nicholas Acciajoli, who loved Zanobi, preſented him to the Emperor as an orator and poet of the firſt rank, and deſired him to give him the crown of laurel, as Petrarch had received it at Rome. The Emperor, who piqued himſelf on encouraging men of letters, granted his requeſt, and crowned Zanobi him-

himſelf, after declaring he was a great poet. To teſtify his acknowledgment, he made a diſcourſe in which he thanked the Prince for having renewed in his favour the ancient cuſtom, and promiſed to dedicate his talents to convey his glorious actions to poſterity. After this he walked through the ſtreets of Piſa, with his laurel-crown, accompanied with the German barons, and other diſtinguiſhed perſons. Villani the hiſtorian, after a ſhort relation of this ceremony, adds a reflection very honourable to Petrarch.

"THERE were in this age, ſays he, two poets crowned; both of them from Florence. Maſter Zanobi de Strata, and Signior Francis Petrarch, of an ancient and worthy family in that city: this laſt was crowned at Rome: his name is more known than that of Zanobi, and his reputation more extenſive: he has compoſed a great number of works, and diſcourſed

diſcourſed on the moſt elevated ſubjects: alſo it muſt be owned he began earlier, and his fame was before that of Zanobi. Neither the one nor the other are known as much as they deſerve, and the taſte for theological ſtudies which occupies our age, makes their productions appear frivolous; notwithſtanding the pleaſure they are capable of producing."

THERE appears no work of Zanobi which could put his name in any competition with that of Petrarch, or that gives us room to ſuppoſe he could deſerve the honour done him; but the requeſt of the grand Senechal was not to be refuſed, and the Emperor could give a crown of laurel at a much eaſier rate than troops or ſupplies. After this ceremony Nicholas Acciajoli went for ſome days to Florence, where he loſt the great reputation he had acquired, by the ſoft and diſſolute life he led; paſſing his days and nights in feaſts, balls, and other

parties of pleaſure, with the beauties of that city. The Florentines received him with honour, but refuſed him the ſuccours he aſked, which but for his conduct, ſays Villani, they would have granted. Petrarch, who had conceived a high opinion of him, was grieved when they informed him of the grand Senechal's conduct, and the injury he did his reputation by ſuch behaviour; and he ceaſed correſponding with his favourite the new poet, and ſoon after his elevation received this letter from the prior of the holy Apoſtles.

"I RESERVE my converſation on that ſhadow of a Cæſar, till I ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing you. I would have wrote you what I thought, if I could have given to my ſtyle all the energy I feel at my ſoul; you will lament his conduct; for my part, I cannot pardon him for having crowned one of our citizens, who troubled the fountain of Parnaſſus. He has turned his head in raiſing him to an

honour

honour he did not deſerve. He was no doubt ignorant of the wrong he did you thereby, and not only you, but all the world."

Boccace was of the ſame opinion with the Prior: he reproached Petrarch that in his letters he gave him the name of Poet. "I do not merit this title, ſaid Boccace, having never had the honour to be crowned with laurel." "What, replied Petrarch, if there were no laurel, muſt the Muſes then keep ſilence? Do not you think as fine verſes may be made under an oak or cheſnut?" And ſpeaking of this coronation, in another letter, he adds, a barbarous laurel ornaments a head, nouriſhed by the Muſes of Anſania; a German cenſor dares to give his judgment of the fine Tranſalpine wits: really this is not ſupportable!

Some days after this, the Emperor granted honours and rewards of another

nature, to the famous Bortoli, then at Piſa, the greateſt lawyer of his age: he made him his counſellor, gave him the arms of Bohemia, and ſeveral other privileges. In the Emperor's return through Italy, he and his Empreſs met with many affronts. The gates of moſt places were ſhut againſt him. Enraged at ſuch treatment, after being crowned Emperor, he made haſte to paſs the *Alps* with great treaſure, but little honour: his riches were increaſed, ſays Villani, but his fame was diminiſhed. Petrarch, who wanted him to reſide in Italy, ſtruck with his ſudden departure, took up the pen, and in indignation wrote him this letter:

"Ah Cæſar! how ungrateful are you! How little do you know the value of things! What your grandfather and others have purſued with labour and blood, you have obtained with eaſe and ſafety, and have as readily abandoned. You renounce

nounce all to return to your barbarous country. I dare not ſay all I could, all I ought to ſay; perſuaded that your flight cauſes you much chagrin, I will not augment it. Go then, ſince you will, but never forget, that no prince before you ever renounced ſo well-founded, ſo glorious a proſpect."

"WISDOM is not an hereditary portion, I ſee it; not that I diſpute your knowledge of government and your military talents, of which you have given us ſo many proofs; it is inclination you want: it is emulation, the ſource of all great and glorious actions. Liſten to what your grandfather and father would ſay, were they to preſent themſelves before you as you paſs the Alps. You have gained much, great Cæſar, by a journey ſo long expected, and by ſo precipitate a return! You bring back with you a crown of iron, a crown of gold and an empty title. They call you Emperor

of

of the Romans, though you are in reality only king of Bohemia; would to God you were not even that; perhaps your ambition incloſed in narrower bounds would make ſome effort to extend itſelf, and that your wants would excite you to recover your patrimony." Lelius brought me your farewel; it cut me to the heart, and he preſented me from you with an antique of Cæſar: if that medal could have ſpoken, what would it not have ſaid againſt your making ſo ſhameful a retreat! Adieu, Cæſar! compare what you have forſaken to what you are going to poſſeſs!"

PEACE was at this time concluded between the Venetians and Genoeſe, through the mediation of the Viſcomti's. It coſt two hundred thouſand florins to the Venetians while the treaty was in agitation. The Doge that ſucceeded Dondolo and was called Marin Fabier, a venerable old man about fourſcore years of age, was beheaded,

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it is ſuppoſed, on the following account. He had a handſome wife who was unfaithful to him: a young Venetian nobleman of great fortune, who made love to one of the maids of honour, having received a very rough reprimand from the Doge for ſome miſconduct he had been guilty of, to revenge the affront he got this motto wrote over the ducal chair, "Marin Fabier has a handſome wife he maintains, and another poſſeſſes her." The enraged Doge could obtain no more from the council than the impriſonment of this young nobleman for a month. Stung with the little regard the people ſhewed for his authority, he plotted to exterminate the order of the nobles, and make himſelf ſole lord of Venice. The conſpiracy was diſcovered, and Marin Fabier was beheaded. He was fond of Petrarch, who ſays, "I knew him formerly: he had more reputation than merit, more courage than prudence. Let his example teach his ſucceſſors that they

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are the chiefs, but not the maſters of the republic, or rather its honourable ſervants."

When Petrarch was re-eſtabliſhed at Milan, he ſent for his ſon John from Verona, who was now eighteen years of age, to have his education finiſhed under his own eye. John had a great affection for a young man whom he had known at Parma and at Verona, where he was ſecretary to Azon de Correge; his name was Modio. He was a youth of genius and knowledge, and a tolerable poet.

Petrarch thought he could not do a better thing than engage this young man to come and live with him, to finiſh the education of his ſon, and to aſſiſt him in his literary works. Accordingly he wrote him this letter of invitation:

"I do not know what my ſon has written, but I know he wiſhes to be informed whether you can come and take up your reſidence

reſidence with us. That you may determine with the more eaſe, I will acquaint you with the nature and conditions of the ſituation we propoſe to you. "I am ſenſible the courts of princes are open to you: but if I know your character, you would prefer our poverty to their riches, a humble independence with a friend, above the treaſures of the Eaſt under a maſter. It is not a ſervant I ſeek in you, it is a friend. I propoſe not to you to labour for us, but to live as we do; to be the maſter of your employment, and to hold the reins of your life. I flatter myſelf that my ſon, who has loved and admired you from his infancy, will make a great progreſs under your direction. If you chooſe it, you ſhall be alſo the aſſociate of my ſtudies, and at liberty to copy my trifles; they will pleaſe me better when wrote out by your hand: you will diſcover the faults that have eſcaped me. I do not offer you

mountains of gold, palaces of marble or purple robes; but a comfortable mediocrity, a temperate and almoſt philoſophic chear, retirement, leiſure, and liberty. It may ſurpriſe you I ſhould offer to another what I poſſeſs not myſelf; but do we not every day behold phyſicians who are indiſpoſed themſelves, give relief and health to others. The luſtre of an empty name, which importunes me though I do not deſire it, prevents my enjoyment of freedom and ſolitude; but you will poſſeſs both, at leaſt till you are known. This is all I can offer you; I ſhall be happy if you can make it agreeable to you to partake my ſtudies, and engage in this manner of life. I forgot our being near St. Ambroſe, which may perhaps have more influence with you than all I have ſaid."

MODIO did not accept this kind invitation. A principle of gratitude to Azoni de Correge prevented him: in a great revolu-

revolution at Verona, Azon had been obliged to leave that city; his eſtates were confiſcated, and his wife and children impriſoned. Modio, whoſe heart was filled with affection and honour, and who loved Azon, would not abandon him in this condition. He followed him, and devoted himſelf to the education of his children. This increaſed Petrarch's eſteem for his character, and a very affectionate correſpondence took place between them.

The month of September was always critical to Petrarch; he generally ſuffered in this ſeaſon from a tertian fever. "I was obliged, ſays he, the fits were ſo violent, to paſs the whole of the month in bed. Had it laſted much longer, it muſt have outlived me." In this ſickneſs news was brought him that the eldeſt of the Viſcomti's was found dead in his bed. His brothers were accuſed of poiſoning him, from the following circumſtance:

One evening when they were ſupping together, Galeas and Barnabas ſaid to Matthew, 'It is a fine thing to be a ſovereign.' 'Yes, replied Matthew, when one has no partners.' From this anſwer it was ſuppoſed he meant to get rid of them, and that they got the ſtart of him. Villani ſays, that he died like a dog without making confeſſion; and that his end was worthy of his life, which was ſpent in ſuch horrible debauchery, that it does not ſeem neceſſary to aſcribe the death that followed it to poiſon. Petrarch, though he was not touched with the death of ſuch a man, was extremely affected with the rumour that reflected on Galeas, to whom he was tenderly attached: he would doubtleſs have left his court, if he had thought him guilty. As to Barnabas, there was no cruelty he was not capable of: he had put to death, for ſome unknown reaſon, a prieſt, ſent by the Pope to preach the cruſade againſt the tyrants of Romania; he had him

roaſted alive in a ſort of iron tub, with bars like a grid-iron, and a handle by which they kept turning it before the fire like a ſpit. Galeas and Barnabas divided the eſtates of Matthew.

Petrarch began to recover in October, and his health was quite re-eſtabliſhed by a letter from his dear Barbatus. It was full of enthuſiaſm and friendſhip, and addreſſed to Francis Petrarch, the King of Poets. The Monks had told Barbate that in all Italy he had this title. Petrarch, after politely joking his friend for his blind partiality, and refuſing with ſome heat the title he aſſigned him, wrote as follows:

"Before the Muſes paſſed from Greece to Italy, it was eaſy to be the King of Poets. What reſpect was paid to the poet Lucilius! To dare to criticiſe him was ſacrilege! What a reputation had Revius and Plautus! we do them

juſtice at preſent, but their wit and talents do not equal their fame: to read their epitaphs, you would believe them as great as Homer and Virgil! Our age is not ſo eaſy; it exacts from poets works more correct and refined. We are ſurrounded with dainty wits, who are not laviſh of their praiſes. Take care, my dear Barbatus, that you do not wrong me by your friendſhip, and overwhelm me with a falſe title. I ſhould fear the being accuſed of high treaſon, if I took the honour you would give me! Where do you pretend my kingdom is placed? Which are its boundaries? There are but two kingdoms of poets, Greece and Italy. The venerable ſire of Mæonia occupies the firſt, and the ſhepherd of Mantua the laſt. For myſelf, I can only reign in my Tranſalpine ſolitude, and on the banks of the Sorgia: it is there alone I can ſay with Ovid in his exile among the Scythians, 'Here there is no one wittier than myſelf."

At the beginning of the year 1356, there came to Milan to ſerve under Galeas, who made him general of his cavalry, Pandolphe, a deſcendant of the antient houſe of Malateſte. He was a cavalier of a noble figure, and a fine countenance, and though brave and warlike, he loved letters and the Muſes. The works of Petrarch had made ſuch an impreſſion on him, that he ſent a painter to take his picture, who made him pay very dear for a bad likeneſs. He was delighted with the ſociety of Petrarch, with whom he ſpent every leiſure moment. The great fatigues he had ſuffered, encamped in winter among the ſnows, and in ſummer expoſed to the ſcorching heats, had brought upon him a ſevere indiſpoſition which had like to have coſt him his life. Petrarch never quitted his room during his illneſs; and when he began to recover, he was carried by his ſervants to Petrarch's houſe at St. Ambroſe, and finding him in his library in 1356.

the midſt of his books, 'Here it is, ſaid he, that I delight to behold you.'

GALEAS was fond of Pandolphe, and confided in his valour and ſkill; but the brutality of Barnabas obliged him to leave Milan. Galeas being attacked with the gout, ordered Pandolphe to review the cavalry; this diſpleaſed Barnabas, who ſent for him immediately. Pandolphe kneeling down to pay his homage, Barnabas ſtruck him with the hilt of his ſword, and would have killed him, but he avoided the ſtroke. Queen de Leſcale, who was preſent, told her huſband it was a baſe action to attempt the life of a gentleman in his own houſe. Barnabas had him put in irons, and commanded his head to be cut off. Galeas ſent his wife, and two of his officers, to beſeech a pardon for Pandolphe. Barnabas anſwered, that he would ſend him to his brother, for him to take revenge

for

for his offence, on which Galeas ſent him back to his own country.

A RUMOUR prevailed at this time that the King of Hungary was coming into Italy againſt the Venetians, and that he had made a league with the Emperor. The Viſcomti's were extremely alarmed, and begged Petrarch to be their ambaſſador to the Emperor, to juſtify their conduct, and to penetrate into his deſigns. "They ſend me into the North, ſays he, when I have moſt need of repoſe. Man is made for labour: I love the man who ſends me, and ſhall be repaid for the fatigue, if I am ſo happy as to ſucceed in my negociation." Petrarch went to Baſtia, where he waited a month for the Emperor. "This prince finiſhes nothing, ſays he, I muſt go ſeek him at the bottom of Barbary." His departure was moſt fortunate, for the city of Baſtia was deſtroyed a few days after by an earthquake, which overthrew at the ſame time more

than fourſcore caſtles on the banks of the Rhine. Petrarch deſcribes this river in affliction, "that its ſtream muſt now run over theſe ruins." Theſe commotions continued a great part of the year. Straſbourg, Treves, Spires, and all the towns on the Rhine, were more violently agitated than the reſt: the inhabitants of theſe towns not daring to continue in them, wandered about in the fields.

PETRARCH arrived at Prague in July; he found the Emperor employed about the famous golden bull which he had juſt beſtowed on the princes of the empire, at the diet of Nuremburg. This ſingular charter, which is at preſent the fundamental law of the empire, ſhews the turn of that age. It begins by an apoſtrophe to ſatan, to pride, to luxury, wrath, and envy. The ſtyle by no means anſwered the dignity of the ſubject.

PETRARCH made but a ſhort ſtay at Prague,

Prague, notwithſtanding the kind reception and requeſt of the Emperor. This prince, though diſpleaſed with the Viſcomti's, did not intend to make war againſt them. His affairs in Germany fully employed him, and the embelliſhment of the city of Prague. He had with him two prelates of diſtinguiſhed merit, who poſſeſſed all his confidence, and went every where with him; Erneſt de Pardowitz, Archbiſhop of Prague, and John Ocſko, Biſhop of Olmutz. Petrarch formed a ſhort union with them during his ſtay at Prague, and correſponded with them afterwards. Erneſt ſaid to him ſometimes, "Friend, I am concerned to ſee you among Barbarians." "Nothing was, however, ſays Petrarch, leſs barbarous than theſe prelates, and the prince they ſerved; they were as gentle, polite, and affable, as if they had been born at Athens."

PETRARCH returned to Milan in the

beginning of September; he would not paſs this critical month in a foreign climate; when he received from his friend Simonides the following letter:

"You are returned in health, my dear Petrarch, thanks be to God! This is the moſt agreeable news I could receive. Life would be nothing to me without you. I dreaded for you the intemperature of the air, and ſtill more the barbarous manners of the country you was in, ſo different as they are from theſe of our beloved Italy. You inquired of me for a good houſekeeper: I found juſt ſuch a one as you wanted, a woman above forty years of age, neat, ſkilful, of good manners and underſtanding in a kitchen. I have uſed every argument, but cannot perſuade her to come to you: ſhe ſays ſhe will be a ſervant no longer, as ſhe can live by her diſtaff."

SOME days after Petrarch's return, there

there arrived a courier at Milan, who brought the news of the battle of Poitiers, in which fourſcore thouſand French were conquered by eight thouſand Engliſh, and King John and his ſon made priſoners. Galeas Viſcomti, who loved France, and was attached to the family who governed there, wiſhed to write to Prince Charles the Dauphin, and to the Cardinal of Bologna, to expreſs his grief; and he begged Petrarch to compoſe theſe letters. That to the Prince is as follows;

"SERENE Prince! If on one ſide grief forces from me lamentation, on the other I am petrified and reduced to ſilence, when I reflect on the caprice of that blind goddeſs who governs the human race. If by a turn of her wheel ſhe has overthrown your illuſtrious father, with his ſon your brother, who can hope to be ſaved from her ſtrokes?"

"I SPEAK not of the loſſes all France has

has ſuſtained in that fatal day, which obſcured the ſun of that great kingdom, and eclipſed the greateſt part of the ſtars that enlightened it."

"GREAT Prince! Your affliction has reached me at this diſtance: God is my witneſs that I ſhare it with you. Of what is not that inſolent hand capable, who dares touch with ſacrilegious hand the diadem of France? With all the princes of Europe, I feel this ſad event. But beſides this, I have a particular concern in it. Your Majeſty will not believe me capable of ever forgetting the marks of goodneſs I received from your grandfather, your father, and yourſelf. There was in your family a ſort of conteſt who ſhould be kindeſt to a man but little known to you. So many benefits are engraved on my heart in lines that time cannot efface, and that ingratitude ſhall never cover with her clouds! And can I then fail to deplore your calamity, or

under

under the weight with which you are charged at your age, endeavour to moderate your grief, and give you the conſolation I ſhould wiſh to receive in your place! Providence has given to your youth what he ſeldom grants to the old age of princes, to know the emptineſs of all things human, and the perfidy of fortune; whoſe power can only be reſiſted by a virtuous ſoul. You have received that ſoul from nature, and have perfected it by ſtudy and experience: on this is founded the public hopes and the ſafety of your kingdom. Heaven has ſpared you to deliver and revenge your father, and to hold the reins of empire for him; if the weight is above your years, it is not beyond your courage. The affairs with which you are overwhelmed, will not permit me to intrude on your time. I conclude with offering to your ſervice my perſon and poſſeſſions. Happy ſhall I be if I can afford any ſuccour to your Majeſty, whom I pray Heaven to conſole

in granting freedom to his father, and victory over his enemies."

THE letter to the Cardinal was in theſe words:

"VERY reverend father and lord! The horrible cataſtrophe of the king my maſter has made ſo deep an impreſſion on me, I have hardly power to ſpeak. If love does not blind me, all the human race ought to grieve for this diſaſter, and princes more than others; but thoſe who are attached like me will be inconſolable!

I FEEL tenderly for the Dauphin, but I hope every thing from his courage and virtues: with the divine aid he ſhall deliver his father, and ſteer the helm of his abandoned kingdom. I thought it my duty, as it was my inclination, to expreſs theſe ſentiments to him, and to you, my lord, who, next to him, are the moſt

ſenſibly

ſenſibly concerned in this unhappy event. Vouchſafe to engage him to uſe with confidence what I have moſt freely offered. The Lord preſerve and make you proſper."

PETRARCH could ſcarcely believe it poſſible, that an invincible hero, the greateſt of kings, ſhould be vanquiſhed by ſo inferior an enemy. The Viſcomti's at this time had enemies on all ſides, and their city was like a veſſel buffeted by the tempeſt. "For my part, ſays Petrarch, I am tranquil in the midſt of theſe ſtorms; and if I did not hear the roaring of the waves, if I did not behold others in agitation, I ſhould be ignorant that I was ſailing on a tempeſtuous ſea, and ſeated at the feet of the pilot. Firm without being motionleſs, I wait, without fearing; no wind is contrary to me; on every ſhore I find a ſafe aſylum. If I dared compare myſelf to Cato, I ſhould ſay, I am in the ſtate

in which he was found by his nephew Brutus: uneaſy for others, but careleſs about himſelf." In fact, while the city of Milan was the theatre of war, Petrarch reviſed ſeveral of his Italian poems.

Soon after this he received a letter from Avignon, written by Socrates, Lelius, and Gui Settimo together. They all inhabited the ſame houſe, and lived in the greateſt union. Petrarch replies, "I ſhould never have believed I could have envied people who dwell in Babylon. Nevertheleſs, I wiſhed to be with you in your houſe, ſhut up from the poiſonous air of that infamous city. I look upon your dwelling to be like the Elyſian fields in the middle of Avernus." Some time after this he received a very ſingular letter from young Agapit Colonna, who had formerly been his pupil: but who had profited very little by his inſtructions. The letter was in a ſharp unpoliſhed

unpoliſhed ſtyle. He thanked him for the pains he had taken with his education; but adds: "Fortune has elevated and overwhelmed you with benefits. Proud of your treaſures, and the elegance of your houſes, you deſpiſe a poor exile fallen from his proſperous ſtate, ill cloathed and worſe provided for, leading a miſerable life in a little houſe near Bologna. You fly from, and think no more of me in this poor ſituation."

PETRARCH anſwered theſe reproaches in the following manner:

"I AM neither rich nor poor. I have every thing that is neceſſary, and I deſire nothing more. It is true, that my income is ſomewhat increaſed; but my expences are increaſed in proportion, and I lay nothing up at the end of the year. You ſay you are poor: I can ſcarcely believe that a perſon of your name and merit can be ſo. But was this the caſe, how

how could you ever think that poverty rendered you deſpicable in my eyes? This is very oppoſite to my character. I deſpiſe no one, and have always had a ſingular regard for you. If I was capable of contempt, it would fall upon the rich rather than the poor: not that riches are contemptible in themſelves, but becauſe they bring ſo many vices in their train."

"YOUR letter has aſtoniſhed me beyond expreſſion: I cannot recover my ſurpriſe, and I look upon it as a dream. You cannot think all you wrote: you only meant to puniſh me for my neglect in writing to you. I will not juſtify myſelf in that particular: I am flattered in your chagrin on that account, and kiſs the hand that wounds me. But you ought to attribute my ſilence to my idleneſs of diſpoſition well known to you, to my occupations which increaſe every day, and to the difficulty of conveying my letters.

ters. I do not comprehend what you mean by the magnificence of my houſes; I dwell in a retired corner of Milan; often a wanderer in the fields, I am ignorant of what paſſes in the city. Adieu! And if it is poſſible, be perſuaded that whether rich or poor, whether I write to you or keep ſilence, I ſhall always be ſincerely attached to you."

In the beginning of the year 1357, Petrarch received a diploma ſent to him by the Biſhop of Olmutz, Chancellor of the Empire, by which the Emperor created him Count Palatine, with all the privileges of that dignity, which conſiſted in creating doctors and lawyers, legitimating the natural children of citizens, crowning poets, giving diſpenſations of age, &c. Theſe Counts were ſometimes alſo ſtewards of the eſtates of the prince, and receivers general of his finances. The Emperor had added to this dignity 1357.

ſome particular privileges and very flattering encomiums.

PETRARCH in his letter of thanks ſays: "I am very grateful for the ſingular favour the Emperor has vouchſafed me, and the obliging expreſſions with which you have heightened this grace. My expectations from his goodneſs and your friendſhip are more than ſatisfied: but I will not receive any gold; be not diſpleaſed that I return that on the bull, by your friend who brought it to me."

THE diploma was enriched with a bull or ſeal of gold, on one ſide of which was the figure of the Emperor ſeated on his throne, with an eagle and a lion; on the other, the city of Rome, with its temples and walls.

PETRARCH ſuſtained a loſs at this time, which he thus ſpeaks of in a letter to Lelius: "An old Milaneſe of fourſcore, who called me his father, and came almoſt

moſt every day to dine with me, has paid the tribute of nature. He was a man of condition but little fortune, of a good character and a lively diſpoſition, though he was almoſt in his ſecond childhood. His queſtions were ſo droll and uncommon, they would have moved a dead man to laughter. He diſputed on philoſophy and religion, and had an inexhauſtible ſtorehouſe of arguments. He ſubmitted to no one but myſelf, and that rather from friendſhip than conviction. He fatigued every one with his queſtions, eſpecially the Monks: he inquired of them at firſt ſight, Have you ſtudied? if they ſaid No, he ſhook his head and went away without a word more; if they replied Yes, then he began his diſputations, turned a queſtion on all ſides with an inexhauſtible volubility, and violent peals of laughter. I aſked him ſometimes with an air of ſurpriſe, from whence he obtained his knowledge, and where were all his books? 'Here, here!

replied he, rubbing his forehead, here is my library; it is from hence I draw my knowledge. Books were only invented to aid the memory, and are only the ſupports of its weakneſs.' This odd aſſertion diverted us extremely. He ſaid nothing but what he firmly believed, and his opinions were the joys of his life. He held in abſolute contempt the rules of grammar, ſpoke incorrectly, and diſputed under the armour of ignorance. He undertook to write a book in your name, I wiſh he had lived to finiſh it, it would have been a notable and moſt ſingular production. Three days before his death, he came to ſeek me with a melancholy countenance: I aſked him what concerned him; he anſwered, 'I am this day fourſcore: how many years think you remain for me; perhaps twenty-five years or thereabouts?' 'Go, ſaid I to him with a ſmile, be eaſy, and you may very well reach thirty.' 'If ſo, replied he, I am content, I deſire no more.'

more.' He went away, and I ſaw him no more. Three days after this, they informed me he was brought to my church to be interred. He had no ſickneſs, no other diſeaſe but old age. I regret his loſs; he loved me, called me father, and his ſingularities amuſed me. Characters of this ſort are neceſſary to divert me from more ſerious and intereſting occupations. After having ſuccoured his old age as much as I was able, I ſhed ſome tears on his tomb, which is in my church of St. Ambroſe. This good old man loved and called you his ſon."

PETRARCH had for ſome time perceived in the letters of Lelius a ſort of confuſion and concern: at laſt, he was informed that a quarrel had happened between him and Socrates, after having lived twenty-eight years in the ſtricteſt friendſhip. It was occaſioned by one of thoſe buſy malicious people who are the plagues of ſociety. They told Lelius

that Socrates ſpoke ill of him, and had even written unkind things of him to Petrarch. Lelius too eaſily believed ſo unlikely a report. Petrarch on this occaſion wrote him a ſharp letter, in which after having juſtified Socrates, he conjured him to go to his friend immediately, for he was perſuaded with good reaſon nothing more was neceſſary to reconcile ſuch old friends. It is to be lamented this letter is not inſerted, which might have ſerved for a model to others in ſuch ſituations. It had all the effect that was to be expected from ſuch an interpoſition: Lelius could not read it without a deluge of tears: he went in his flood of grief to Socrates, fell upon his neck and wept; Socrates embraced him in the tendereſt manner: thoſe who were by could hardly ſtand this affecting reconciliation. Petrarch was full of joy when he was informed of it, and wrote to congratulate them both.

IN the violent heats of this year, Petrarch retired to a little village near the river Adda, three miles from Milan. "The ſituation, ſays he, is charming, and the air very pure. It is on a little elevation in the middle of a plain, ſurrounded on all ſides with fountains, not rapid and noiſy as thoſe of Vaucluſe, but ſmooth and gentle in their motion. The courſe of theſe waters is ſo intermingled, that their beginnings or endings cannot be diſcovered. As if they would imitate the dance of the nymphs, they approach, retire, unite and ſeparate alternately in a moſt agreeable and ſingular manner. After forming a ſort of labyrinth by theſe meanderings, they go all together, and empty themſelves into the ſame reſervoir."

JOHN Viſcomti had choſen this ſituation to found a Carthuſian monaſtery. Petrarch deſigned at firſt to lodge in it, and the Carthuſians conſented: but as he could not do without horſes and attendants,

dants, he feared that the noiſe, and above all the drunkenneſs of ſervants, would give trouble and diſtreſs in this holy retreat. He therefore hired a houſe in the neighbourhood, near enough to go there any hour of the day. He gave this houſe the name of Linterno, in memory of Scipio Africanus, whoſe country houſe was ſo called; and in joke ſometimes he called it the Inferno.

3. WHILE Petrarch was in this retirement, he received a letter from his friend Settimo, who deſired he would inform him of all the occupations and projects of his ſon John. Petrarch wrote this anſwer.

"THE train of my life has been uniform ſince the frozen hand of age has extinguiſhed the ardour of youth, and that fatal paſſion which ſo long tormented me! but what do I ſay! It is the dew of heaven that has produced this bleſſed effect. Do we not every day behold,

behold, to the ſhame of humanity, old men plunged in debauchery; what a horrid and dangerous ſpectacle for youth! Like a weary traveller, I double my ſteps as I haſten to the end of my courſe. I read and write day and night; one is my refreſhment after the other; and my labours grow continually. Novelty puſhes me on, obſtacles increaſe my ardour. God, who knows my intentions, will aſſiſt me, if he ſees it for the good of my ſoul. Labour is certain, ſucceſs hazardous; I feel this in common with thoſe who follow the ſame painful courſe of life. I wiſh poſterity to know and approve me: if I do not ſucceed there, I ſhall be known in my own age, or at leaſt by my friends. Nothing more is neceſſary; it would be even ſufficient to know my own character, if it was ſuch as it ought to be; but with this, alas! I cannot flatter myſelf. Whatever ſhall be the ſucceſs of my labours, I pray that God will not abandon me in old age, and above all at my death.

My

My health is ſo good, my body ſo ſtrong, that neither increaſe of years, ſerious occupations, abſtinence, nor the ſtrokes of grief, have been able to ſubdue this ſtubborn aſs, on which I make continual war."

"As to fortune, I poſſeſs that happy medium which is equally diſtant from both extreams, except in one point, that I am more ſought after than I would be, or than ſuits with my repoſe. I am loved without being known or ſeen, and that is perhaps the reaſon of it. I have already paſſed an Olympiad at Milan, a thing which neither myſelf nor my friends thought poſſible; ſo true it is, we ought never to ſay, here I will live, or there I will die, for we can be certain of nothing in this world. The kindneſs I have received at Milan attaches me not only to its inhabitants but to its houſes, land, air, and even its walls, not to ſpeak of my friends and acquaintance.

I reſide

I reſide in a very retired corner of the city toward the Weſt."

"An ancient religious cuſtom draws the people on ſundays to the church of St. Ambroſe, who is my neighbour; the reſt of the week this ſpot is a deſart. Behold what this great ſaint does for his gueſt, he conſoles me by his preſence, he gives ſpiritual ſuccour to my ſoul, and ſaves it from diſguſt: under the ſhelter of his wings I ſee the tempeſts, and hear the noiſe of the waves, but they come not near to trouble me. When I go out to pay my duty to my maſter, or for ſome other buſineſs (which rarely happens) I ſalute every one on the right ſide, and on the left, by a ſimple motion of my head, without ſtopping or ſpeaking to any; my increaſe of fortune has made no alteration in my diet or ſleep, which you know was always ſlender: on the contrary, I retrench ſtill, and ſhall ſoon have nothing more to diminiſh. I am

only

only in bed while I ſleep, except I am ſick. It appears to me that ſleep ſo ſtrongly reſembles death, and the bed our tomb, that the idea gives me a diſguſt to my bed, from which I riſe the moment I awake, and go into my library. I generally do this in the middle of the night, except when the nights are at the ſhorteſt. I grant to nature only what ſhe commands imperiouſly, and which it is not poſſible to refuſe her."

"I AM always fond of ſolitude and ſilence; but when I am with my friends, I am diſpoſed to converſe a great deal: this happens, perhaps, becauſe I ſee them ſeldom, and I would compenſate for the ſilence of a year, by the prate of a day. And when my friends depart, I become dumb again."

"NOTHING is ſo fatiguing as to converſe with many, or with one whom we do not love, and who is not converſant with

the ſame ſubjects as ourſelves. I reſemble thoſe people of whom Seneca ſpeaks, who take life in detail rather than in the groſs. I have taken a houſe at a league from Milan, to ſhelter me from the heats, in a fine clear air, where I am ſtill more at liberty than in the town: here my table is abundantly ſupplied; the peaſants are ambitious, which ſhall bring me moſt fruits, fiſh, ducks, and all ſorts of wild fowl. There is in my neighbourhood a fine monaſtery of the Carthuſians newly founded, where I can enjoy at all hours of the day the pure and delightful pleaſures of religion. The gates are always open to me, a privilege few people poſſeſs: but we ſhould take care not to give trouble to others in ſeeking our own convenience, and this prevented my lodging there. It appears to me that it is here we moſt frequently fail in delicacy; and it is becauſe we are more occupied with ourſelves than ſolicitous for our fellow-creatures. In this

happy

happy retreat, I wiſh for nothing but my old friends; I was rich in many ſuch formerly, but death and abſence have diminiſhed theſe poſſeſſions, and they are only to be regained in imagination. Your ſociety, and that of Socrates, I long flattered myſelf with obtaining: if you perſiſt in your rigour, I muſt draw all the conſolation I can from my pious monks; their converſation is neither bright nor wiſe, but it is innocent and holy: their repaſts are not inviting, but there is a perfect freedom in their company, and their prayers will be my great conſolation both in life and at death."

"SOLOMON has told us that riches draw paraſites. I have never obtained ſo much of them as to experience this truth. The little gold I have paſſes through my fingers, and my coffer is rather a paſſage than dwelling-place for it. I know that it is made to ſolace the wants,

wants, and not to nouriſh the paſſions of men. In this view it was originally ſought from the mines, purified, ſtruck and ſtamped. He who expends it properly is its maſter, he who lays it up its keeper, he who loves it a fool, he who fears it a ſlave, he who adores it an idolater: the truly wiſe man is he who deſpiſes it. You wiſh to hear news of our young man; I don't know what to ſay about him: his manners are gentle, and the bloſſoms of his youth promiſe fruit; of what ſort it will be, I cannot yet gueſs; but I think I can flatter myſelf he will be an honeſt man. I know he has underſtanding; but of what uſe is underſtanding if not cultivated by ſtudy? he flies from a book, as he would fly from the face of a ſerpent.

If his diſpoſition pleaſes me, I ſee with grief that idleneſs will reduce it to nothing. Prayers, careſſes, menaces and pains, all have been tried by me without

ſucceſs: nature has always ſurmounted my endeavours. I have nothing, however, to reproach myſelf with; and I ſhall be ſatisfied if, as I hope, he turns out a good man. The glory that letters beſtow, is, no doubt, greatly deſirable; but it is difficult to acquire: it is more eaſy to live a life of virtue, than a life of fame. We pardon a man if he is not wiſe, but we never forgive him if he is defective in goodneſs; and Themiſtocles ſaid, he loved the man much better who was without letters, than letters without the man."

THIS year the Viſcomti's laid ſiege to Pavia. There was in this city a man of ſingular character, who was called James Boſſalaro: his father was a trunk-maker. He early abandoned the world to live in a deſart the life of a hermit, and afterwards took the habit of the order of St. Auguſtine, and acquired great reputation for knowledge and piety; nothing

was

was talked of at Pavia but the eloquence of brother James. Encouraged by theſe attentions, he declaimed with vehemence againſt uſury, monopolies, and the ornaments of dreſs; and the effect of his preaching was a thorough reformation. Uſurers were no more ſeen at Pavia; and even the ladies renounced their finery. After this he began to attack tyranny, and tyrants, and exhorted the Pavians to eſtabliſh a republican government. The people liſtened to him greedily, complied with all his regulations, and gave him ſixty men for his guard; ſo that the lords of Beccaria, then governors of Pavia, did not dare to oppoſe him, and he became maſter in fact, though without any change of his monaſtic life, and his commands were conſidered as bleſſings. "The ſermons of a little Monk, ſays Villani, did all this."

Petrarch wrote a letter to brother James, repreſenting to him how ill war

ſuited the habit of a Monk; and that it was incumbent on him to promote peace, rather than ſow the flames of diſcord: but it made no impreſſion on him. When the Viſcomti's laid ſiege to Pavia, the citizens were preſſed by famine, and began to be diſcouraged. Brother James never ceaſed to animate them by his preachings, and with a prophetic tone announced victory. One day their money failing, he ſpoke with ſo much force againſt luxury, that the ladies brought him their jewels and rich habits, and the men all the gold and ſilver they poſſeſſed. He got the former ſold at Venice, and obtained a conſiderable ſum for them, which ſerved to ſupport them for ſome time: but they were at laſt obliged to capitulate. Brother James treated with Galeas, who ſhewed him the utmoſt reſpect, and granted all his demands. After having concerted with him the neceſſary regulations, he brought him to Milan, where as ſoon as he arrived he delivered

livered him up to the Monks of his order, by whom brother James was ſhut up in a ſtrong priſon, with very little light, ſays Villani, and a great many wants; where, no doubt, he repented he had not followed the good advice of Petrarch.

The year 1358 was almoſt wholly employed by Petrarch in his Treatiſe on the remedies of good and bad fortune. It is dedicated to his friend Azon de Correge, whoſe paſt life and preſent ſituation occaſioned him to undertake this work. In his dedication he deſcribes it as follows:

"When I conſider the inſtability of human affairs, and the variations of fortune, I find nothing more uncertain or reſtleſs than the life of man. Nature has given to animals an excellent remedy under diſaſters, which is the ignorance of them. We ſeem better treated in intel-

ligence, foreſight, and memory; no doubt theſe are admirable preſents; but they often annoy more than they aſſiſt us. A prey to unuſeful or diſtreſſing cares, we are tormented by the preſent, the paſt, and the future; and, as if we feared we ſhould not be miſerable enough, we join to the evil we ſuffer the remembrance of a former diſtreſs, and the apprehenſion of ſome future calamity. This is the Cerberus with three heads we combat without ceaſing. Our life might be gay and happy if we would: but we eagerly ſeek ſubjects of affliction to render it irkſome and melancholy. We paſs the firſt years of this life in the ſhades of ignorance, the ſucceeding ones in pain and labour, the latter part in grief and remorſe, and the whole in error: nor do we ſuffer ourſelves to poſſeſs one bright day without a cloud."

"LET us examine this matter with ſincerity, and we ſhall agree that our diſ-

treſſes

treſſes chiefly ariſe from ourſelves. It is virtue alone which can render us ſuperior to fortune: we quit her ſtandard, and the combat is no longer equal. Fortune mocks us; ſhe turns us on her wheel, ſhe raiſes and abaſes us at her pleaſure, but her power is founded on our weakneſs. This is an old rooted evil, but it is not incurable; there is nothing a firm and elevated mind cannot accompliſh. The diſcourſe of the wiſe, and the ſtudy of good books, are the beſt remedies I know of; but to theſe we muſt join the conſent of the ſoul, without which the beſt advice will be uſeleſs. What gratitude do we not owe to thoſe great men, who, though dead many ages before us, live with us by their works, diſcourſe with us, are our maſters and guides, and ſerve us as pilots in the navigation of life, where our veſſel is agitated without ceaſing by the ſtorms of our paſſions! It is here that true philoſophy brings us to a ſafe port, by a ſure and eaſy paſſage; not like

that of the ſchools, which raiſing us on its airy and deceitful wings, and cauſing us to hover on the clouds of frivolous diſpute, lets us fall without any light or inſtruction in the ſame place where ſhe took us up."

"DEAR friend, I do not attempt to exhort you to the ſtudy I judge ſo important. Nature has given you a taſte for all knowledge: but fortune has denied you the leiſure to acquire it: yet whenever you could ſteal a moment from public affairs, you ſought the converſation of wiſe men; and I have remarked that your memory often ſerved you inſtead of books. It is therefore unneceſſary to invite you to do what you have always done; but as we cannot retain all we hear or read, it may be uſeful to furniſh your mind with ſome maxims that may beſt ſerve to arm you againſt the aſſaults of misfortune. The vulgar, and even philoſophers, have decided that adverſe fortune was moſt

difficult

difficult to ſuſtain: for my own part I am of a different opinion, and believe it more eaſy to ſupport adverſity than proſperity; and that fortune is more treacherous and dangerous when ſhe careſſes, than when ſhe diſmays; experience has taught me this, not books or arguments: I have ſeen many perſons ſuſtain great loſſes, poverty, exile, tortures, death, and even diſorders that were worſe than death, with courage; but I have ſeen none whoſe heads have not been turned by power, riches, and honours. How often have we beheld thoſe overthrown by good fortune, who could never be ſhaken by bad! This made me wiſh to learn how to ſupport a great fortune. You know the ſhort time this work has taken; I have been leſs attentive to what might ſhine, than to what might be uſeful on this ſubject. Truth and virtue are the wealth of all men, and ſhall I not diſcourſe of theſe with my dear Azon? I would prepare for you,

as in a little portable box, a friendly antidote againſt the poiſon of good and bad fortune. The one requires a rein to repreſs the ſallies of a tranſported ſoul; the other a conſolation to fortify the overwhelmed and afflicted ſpirit."

"NATURE gave you, my friend, the heart of a king; but ſhe gave you not a kingdom, of which therefore fortune could not deprive you. But I doubt whether our age can furniſh an example of worſe or better treatment from her than yourſelf. In the firſt part of life you was bleſt with an admirable conſtitution, and aſtoniſhing health and vigour: ſome years after we beheld you thrice abandoned by the phyſicians, who deſpaired of your life. The heavenly phyſician, who was your ſole reſource, reſtored your health, but not your former ſtrength; you were then called iron-footed, for your ſingular force and agility: you are now bent, and lean upon the

ſhoulders of thoſe whom you formerly ſupported; your country beheld you one day its governor, the next an exile. Princes diſputed for your friendſhip, and afterwards conſpired your ruin. You loſt by death the greateſt part of your friends; the reſt, according to cuſtom, deſerted you in calamity. To theſe misfortunes was added a violent diſeaſe, which attacked you when you were deſtitute of all ſuccours, at a diſtance from your country and family, in a ſtrange land inveſted by the troops of your enemies, ſo that thoſe two or three friends, whom fortune had left you, could not come near to relieve you. In a word, you have experienced every hardſhip but impriſonment and death: but what do I ſay? you have felt all the horrors of the former, when your faithful wife and children were ſhut up by your enemies; and even death followed you, and took one of thoſe children, for whoſe loſs you would willingly have ſacrificed your own."

"In you have been united the fortunes of Pompey and Marius; but you were neither arrogant in proſperity as the one, nor diſcouraged in adverſity as the other. You have ſupported both in a manner that has made you loved by your friends, and admired by your enemies. There is a peculiar charm in the ſerene and tranquil air of virtue, which enlightens all around it, in the midſt of the darkeſt ſcenes, and the greateſt calamities. My ancient friendſhip for you has cauſed me to quit every thing to perform a work, in which, as in a glaſs, you may adjuſt and prepare your ſoul for all events; and be able to ſay as Æneas did to the Sybil: "Nothing of this is new to me, I have foreſeen and am prepared for it all." I am ſenſible that in the diſorders of the mind, as well as thoſe of the body, diſcourſes are not thought the moſt efficacious remedies; but I am perſuaded alſo that the malady of the ſoul ought to be cured by ſpiritual applications. If we

ſee

ſee a friend in diſtreſs, and give him all the conſolation we are able, we perform the duties of friendſhip; which pays more attention to the diſpoſition of the heart, than the value of the gift. A ſmall preſent may be the teſtimony of a great love. There is no good I do not wiſh you; and this is all I can offer toward it. I wiſh this little treatiſe may be of uſe to you: if it ſhould not anſwer my hopes, I ſhall however be ſecure of pardon from your friendſhip: it preſents you with the four great paſſions, hope and joy, the daughters of proſperity, fear and grief, the offspring of adverſity, who attack the ſoul, and lance at it all their arrows. Reaſon commands in the citadel to repulſe them: your penetration will eaſily perceive which ſide will obtain the victory."

This treatiſe of Petrarch's made a great noiſe: the moment it appeared every one was eager to obtain it. It is full of

of genius, erudition and true philoſophy, and enlivened by a thouſand examples from ancient and from modern hiſtory. We muſt add in juſtice to Petrarch, that the misfortunes of Azon de Correge never leſſened his friendſhip for him to his death. The courſe of his ſufferings and exile is not very certain: three of his ſervants were hanged, and he only ſaved his life by retiring to Ferrara, and at laſt went to Mantua, to live with the relations of his wife.

In June 1358 a peace was concluded between the Gonzagua's, lords of Mantua, and the Viſcomti's, to which Petrarch, by his influence, greatly contributed. One of the articles of it was, that Ugolin Gonzagua ſhould eſpouſe Catharine Viſcomti, the daughter of Matthew Viſcomti. The marriage was celebrated at Milan with great magnificence: at the ſame time Barnabas had a child baptiſed. The feaſts on theſe occaſions laſted ſeveral days, with games and tournaments, and all kinds of rejoicings.

Petrarch was a great part of the ſummer at Linterno. The Carthuſians, with whom he ſpent much of his time, talked of nothing but the ſanctity and virtues of their general; this was John Birel, whom the Cardinals would have made Pope after the death of Clement, if the Cardinal de Taillerand had not oppoſed it. Petrarch was preſſed by theſe Monks to write to John Birel; as the Prior of the Carthuſians at Milan was going to a general chapter held in the great monaſtery of that order. His letter is dated, "From the Monaſtery of the Carthuſians at Milan, where I dwell."

"Full of aſtoniſhment and admiration, I ſpeak to you as I would ſpeak to Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who, no doubt, dwells in your heart: for the heart of the juſt, is it not the temple of God? They ſay you are an angel, and that you lead the life an angel would do if he was on earth. For my part, I behold you as

a ſtar

a ſtar which riſes from the monaſtery of the Carthuſians, to enlighten a ſinful world; as we ſee the morning ſun riſe from the Eaſtern mountain, to illuminate the world. How happy are you! How miſerable am I! While I am ſtruggling with the tempeſtuous waves of time, in continual view of the death I dread; you are arrived ſafe in port, and, ſo to ſpeak, entered into the porch of paradiſe, with the hope, or rather the aſſurance of a bleſſed and endleſs life!"

AFTER beſeeching the bleſſing of his prayers that God would inſpire his mind with unfeigned charity, perfect piety, and holy religion; he finiſhes his letter thus:

"FROM whence can my confidence ariſe to a man I have never ſeen? It is not my merit which gives it, but my love for you and your pious flock. It is the idea of your piety which makes me hope an eaſy acceſs to your favour. We ſome-

times love thoſe the beſt we do not perſonally behold. Sinner as I am, I ſee you in Jeſus Chriſt, who views us all, and whom we behold in all things. I would however that my eyes alſo rejoiced in this ſight, and though I daily hear of your pious words, that my ears could enjoy them from your own mouth. In fine, though I embrace you tenderly with my ſoul, I wiſh to enfold you in my arms, and kiſs that hand I revere, that hand conſecrated to God. I know you better than you imagine. Placed on a ſacred elevation, your virtue makes you known of many with whom you are not acquainted. To this is joined, that precious pledge I have confided to your care, that only brother enrolled in the militia of Jeſus Chriſt, under the banners of your protection. Of all the gifts I have received from nature or fortune, none is ſo dear to me as he is: I know that you love him as your ſon: you have taken him from me: I am conſoled, I rejoice,

nay,

nay, I glory in a brother worthy to ſerve Jeſus Chriſt in your holy family; this has inſpired me with confidence towards you. The Prior of the Carthuſians at Milan, who will preſent you with my letter and my homage, will confirm my affectionate ſentiments for you and your order."

JOHN BIREL, in his anſwer to Petrarch, reprimands him ſeverely for the praiſes he had given him, ſaying, that it was not right to praiſe any one to their face. He exhorts Petrarch to employ the great talents God had given him, in works on morals and devotion, and in particular deſired he would write a treatiſe on the dignity of human nature, which Pope Innocent the IIId had promiſed to the world when he publiſhed his treatiſe on the miſery of man.

PETRARCH, after juſtifying himſelf for the praiſes he had beſtowed by the examples

ples of the greateſt ſaints, Auguſtin, Jerome, Ambroſe, &c. ſays, "I could make you the ſame reproaches with much better foundation: I neither claim nor merit the praiſes you have beſtowed on my genius. You deſire me to make good the promiſes of others, who have not time to fulfil my own. Perhaps alſo, it was a ſubject too difficult for the great Pope, and what then will it be for me? Innocent the third, was one of the wiſeſt men of his age, and did honour to the Holy See. He knew that human miſery was an extenſive, and human felicity, a ſhort and delicate ſubject."

"I AM engaged in a treatiſe on the remedies of good and bad fortune, in which I try to ſuppreſs or extirpate, if poſſible, the paſſions of the ſoul. I was in the chapter of grief and miſery when I received your letter. I apprehend that the malady of the ſoul called grief, can only be cured by the ſubject of joy we are furniſhed

niſhed with from the dignity of human nature. One would have imagined you knew what I was about when you wrote, and that you meant your letter as a ſpur: it is certain I am animated by it. The honour of your notice, and the pleaſure of obeying your commands, ſhall inſpire me with courage; and if I cannot treat the ſubject in particular as you deſire, you will accept it as conſidered more generally in the treatiſe I have mentioned."

THE correſpondence of Petrarch with John Birel was ſhort. This general of the Carthuſians died ſoon after with the higheſt reputation for his piety and good works.

PETRARCH had an inflammation in his leg while he was at Linterno, occaſioned by a large volume of Cicero's Epiſtles falling on it, as he was reaching it down, and this happened more than once. "I could not help, ſays he, aſking Cicero, with a ſmile, why do you ſtrike the man who

who loves you ſo much?" His leg was ſo bad through neglect, that advice was ſent for, and the phyſicians thought it muſt be cut off; but by reſt and fomentations he recovered. It is ſingular, adds Petrarch, that from my childhood, the accidents I have met with have always choſen this leg; which has made one of my ſervants call it pleaſantly, the leg of ill fortune: in reality theſe are motives to believe in fate; and why not, if by this word we underſtand Providence!

As ſoon as he recovered, Petrarch took a little journey to Bergamo, eight leagues from Milan. The occaſion of it was this. There was in that city a goldſmith of excellent ſkill in his trade; he was born with a lively genius, and would have made a great progreſs in letters, if he had applied to them early; but he was ſomewhat advanced in life when this humour took hold of him. It ſoon abſorbed his whole attention, and cauſed him to neglect his trade. Struck with the renown of Petrarch

trarch, he was determined, whatever it coſt him, to become acquainted with ſo great a man, and to merit his eſteem: he tried ſeveral methods to introduce himſelf, and at laſt ſucceeded. It would have been barbarous, ſays Petrarch, to have refuſed him, what coſt me ſo little, and delighted him ſo much. The favourable reception that Petrarch gave him quite turned his head; his joy was expreſſed in his countenance, gait, and geſtures; he ſpent a great part of his fortune, in having the name and arms of Petrarch either chaſed, carved, or inlaid upon every thing in his houſe: and at a great expence he got all his writings copied; for Petrarch had given to his ardent intreaties, what he had denied the greateſt Princes. By degrees he entirely changed his character and manner of life, and abandoned his trade, which was a very profitable one.

PETRARCH repeatedly told him it was too

too late to devote himſelf to ſtudy, and that he ought on no account to quit his buſineſs. Obedient to his advice on every other ſubject, and liſtening to him as an oracle, he would not be perſuaded in this matter to alter his reſolution, but ſhut up his ſhop and ſpent all his time in the ſchools of the profeſſors, in which that city abounded.

He was paſſionately deſirous that Petrarch ſhould viſit him at Bergamo; one day only, ſaid he, would he honour my houſe with his preſence, it would be my glory and felicity for ages. Petrarch kept him in ſuſpenſe for ſome years, but at laſt, moved with his earneſt ſupplications, and the pleaſure he felt in beſtowing happineſs, he went to Bergamo, though ſome of his friends were againſt it, and thought it would be demeaning himſelf. The jeweller, whoſe name was Henry Copra, came to fetch him, and that he

might be amuſed upon the road, he brought with him ſome men of genius whoſe converſation might be agreeable to him; ſome of Petrarch's friends followed, curious to obſerve the event of this ſingular viſit. When they came to Bergamo, the governor, commanding officer, and principal people of the city came out to meet Petrarch, and rendered him the greateſt honours. They would have lodged him in the city hotel, or ſome palace. The goldſmith was terrified leaſt he ſhould not be preferred, but he was unjuſt to Petrarch, who was faithful to his promiſe, and went with the friends who followed him to his houſe. He had made vaſt preparations; the houſe was magnificently decorated, the chamber deſtined to Petrarch hung with purple, the bed gilt, and the banquet was a royal one. His library was more like a ſcholar's devoted to letters, than a tradeſman's who had ſpent his life in a ſhop.

Petrarch went away the next day, ſatiated with honours and good things. Never was a hoſt ſo delighted with his gueſt: his joy was ſo immoderate, that his relations feared he would fall ſick, or turn fool. The governor, and a great train, accompanied Petrarch much further than he deſired. The goldſmith could not quit him, and they were obliged at laſt to force him away.

Petrarch arrived that night at Linterno, where he paſſed the reſt of the autumn, 1358. He had a letter from Lelius, in which he informs him that the office of Apoſtolic Secretary was conferred on Zanobi de Strata, but had been ſolicited for him by his friends. Petrarch, after repeating what he had ſo often ſaid on this ſubject, adds:

"It gives me pleaſure Zanobi has this employment: I love, and am ſure of being beloved by him. Among ſo many

enemies of God and man, we ſhall at leaſt have one friend in that court. But I lament the loſs of the Muſes, and I pity his fate. In accepting this office, he has had more regard to riches, than reputation, life, or repoſe. It was not long ago he joked me in a friendly manner, for chuſing a turbulent and noiſy city for my Helicon. He was ignorant of the free, retired, and tranquil life I lead at Milan. He diſapproved alſo of my ſituation in Provence, ſuppoſing it impoſſible for any one to be happy on that ſide the Alps. Nevertheleſs, at Vaucluſe, if reſpecting my body and my errors I led the life of a man, with reſpect to the peace of my mind, I led the life of an angel. When Zanobi talked in this manner, he did not foreſee he ſhould ſoon be an exile from Italy, and an inhabitant of the Babylonian Parnaſſus. If I know him, he will often regret his country, and the leiſure he enjoyed at Naples, and will envy the freedom I poſſeſs at Milan.

Milan. He will be richer, no doubt; but he will be leſs happy."

It was moſt ſevere weather when Petrarch wrote this letter; his ink was frozen, his hand benumbed. It ſnowed violently: ſo great a quantity had never been ſeen between the Alps and the Appennine. Many villages and houſes in the country ſuffered extremely. At Bologna the ſnow lay ſixty feet deep, and they made a vault under it, where the young people had feaſts and diverſions. Villani, and other hiſtorians, ſpeak of this ſnow, which fell in February, as exceeding what had been known in the memory of man. 1359.

Petrarch's ſon was at this time at Avignon. Simonides, who was there alſo, after ſpeaking of their common friends Lelius, Socrates, &c. with all the warmth of friendſhip, talks to him of his ſon, whom he calls John Petrarch.

"He

" He hardly ever leaves me, ſays he; he amuſes me by his converſation, and teaches me many things. I find him gentle and modeſt; a good ſign in a young man, if we may believe Seneca. I conjure you not to give ear too lightly to what may be ſaid againſt him; either I am much deceived, or you will ſee him one day almoſt ſuch as you wiſh him to be." We are not told why Petrarch's ſon went to reſide at Avignon, or what he had done to incur his father's diſpleaſure.

PETRARCH had a viſit this year from his friend Boccace. United by the ſame genius and diſpoſition, they wrote often, and had a tender regard for each other. They had been but little together before, and this re-union confirmed their friendſhip. Boccace called Petrarch his maſter, and expreſſed great obligations to him for the knowledge he had communicated to him. His character had been diſſipated and libertine, and he confeſſes that to

Petrarch

Petrarch he owed the converſion of his heart. His Decameron, which he wrote in 1348, is a proof of the freedom of his ſentiments in the early part of his life. He was about forty-five years old when he came to Milan. Petrarch convinced him it was ſhameful at his age to loſe his time among women; that he ought to employ himſelf in more ſerious purſuits, and turn his ſolicitude towards Heaven, inſtead of fixing it upon the earth. His eclogues, like thoſe of Petrarch, are obſcure and enigmatical.

After paſſing ſome days at Milan, his affairs obliged him to return to Florence in the beginning of April. The weather was ſtormy, and the waters out. Petrarch begged he would write to him as ſoon as he had paſſed the Po and the other rivers, which he did.

Petrarch writing to Simonides, ſpeaks thus of this viſit:

"We

"We have paſſed our days delightfully, but they ſlided too faſt away. We only wanted you to complete our ſociety. I could not be eaſy at my friend's ſetting out in ſuch bad weather, till I learned he had paſſed ſafely the king of rivers; he has only after this to croſs the Appennine, that father of the mountains. This friend knows all my thoughts, and will give you a faithful account of my tranſactions."

Simonides anſwered Petrarch from Florence: "Be at peace, our dear Boccace has paſſed the king of rivers, and the father of mountains, and is arrived here ſafe and in good health."

Soon after his arrival at Florence, Boccace ſent Petrarch a fine copy of Dante's poem, which he had taken the pains to copy, and he apologiſes for the praiſes he gives him, by ſaying he was his firſt maſter, the firſt light which illuminated his

his mind. It was generally thought Petrarch was jealous of Dante, becauſe he had no copy of his works. Petrarch was concerned that Boccace ſhould adopt this opinion, and wrote to him as follows.

"The praiſes you have given to Dante are well founded, worthy both of him and you, and much more flattering than thoſe applauſes of the vulgar, which diſturb the peace of his manes."

"If we owe much to the fathers of our body, how much more are we indebted to thoſe who have formed our mind. I unite with you in praiſing this great poet, whoſe ſtyle is vulgar, but whoſe ſentiments are noble and beautiful. I am only diſpleaſed that you know me ſo little, by whom I wiſh to be perfectly known: of all the plagues of the ſoul, I am the leaſt aſſaulted by envy. My father was ſtrictly united with Dante, and the ſame ill fortune purſued them:

them: neither injuſtice, exile, nor poverty, neither the love of his wife or children, could take this poet from his ſtudies, though they required ſilence and repoſe: for this I can never enough admire him. I ſee many reaſons for loving, but none for hating or deſpiſing him. His genius, ſentiment, and humour, excellent in their kind, place him very far above contempt. I feared when young to read writers in the ſame language, leſt by hazard I ſhould copy their ſentiments or manner. I have always avoided with care every kind of imitation, and if it has happened, it has been by accident; this was the reaſon I did not read Dante then, though I admire him ſincerely now; and was I envious it muſt be of the living, for death is the tomb of envy, as well as of hatred. All that I can be reproached for is, that I have ſaid, he ſucceeded beſt in the vulgar tongue, both in verſe and proſe; that he riſes higher and pleaſes moſt in this,

you will agree with me; and what author is there who has ſucceeded equally in every ſtyle? This was not even granted to Cicero, Virgil, Salluſt or Plato, when eloquence now dead was at its height. It is ſufficient for a man to excel in one ſpecies of writing. I had this upon my mind, and I am conſoled now that I have expreſſed it to you."

In May, 1359, Petrarch received a letter from the empreſs Ann, to inform him of the birth of a daughter, and the joy this event had given her. She had been married five years without any children.

Petrarch in his anſwer expreſſes his gratitude for the great honour ſhe had done him; and enumerates the illuſtrious women, whoſe virtue, courage, and great actions have given them ſuch juſt renown.

Petrarch being informed, his friend

the

the biſhop of Cavaillon was returned from Germany to his dioceſe, after he had been in quality of Nuncio to the Pope, wrote to congratulate him on his arrival; and ſays, "I dread more than death, thoſe long and dangerous journeys you take ſo often; it is time for you to repoſe yourſelf. I cannot expreſs the ardent deſire I have to behold you again; it is now ſeven years that we have been ſeparated. I was in my youth abſorbed in love; in age I am wrapped up in my friends, chilled in one period, and warmed in the other. I reſign what I once adored, and I adore thoſe I then only loved. At the moment when you leaſt think of it, you will perhaps ſee me *in your library; on the banks* of my river or in my cave, I wait for my Socrates, or rather your Socrates. Love him, treat him as your dear child, as you have always treated me, and never forget your ſervant."

SOME malicious people perſecuted Socrates. Petrarch wrote to encourage him, and invite him to Milan. "I know, ſays he, you wiſh to ſee me; never have we been ſo long ſeparated; nothing indeed can divide ſouls united by virtue and the faith of Jeſus Chriſt: but after all, there is nothing like the preſence of a beloved friend. Come, you are expected and longed for; you will find friends unknown to you, and a reputation; your ſociety will increaſe, and not diminiſh: come, the way is ſhort; let nothing ſtop you: either you muſt fix with me, or I muſt come to you. Your journey will not be unuſeful; you will ſee me; you will ſee Italy: the Alps, which ſeparate you at preſent from your friend, will ſerve you as a barrier againſt thoſe envious ſerpents who purſue your peace."

SOCRATES did not accept this invitation; he loved Petrarch above all men;

he deteſted Avignon, and wiſhed to ſee Italy; but he could not reſolve to quit France, and run the hazard of ending his days in a foreign country.

When Petrarch returned from Linterno, he met with an accident in his houſe at Milan, which diſtreſſed him very much. As he aroſe one morning he found he had been robbed of all but his books; as he perceived it was a domeſtic robbery, he could ſuſpect none but his ſon John, who was returned from Avignon, and his ſervants. He was become extremely libertine, and it was the neceſſities his debauched life reduced him to that had brought him to this action: he fought every day with his father's ſervants, and Petrarch could not keep either him or them within any bounds, ſo that he loſt all patience, and turned them all out of his houſe; his ſon begged to be received again, but Petrarch would not for ſome time conſent to it.

This

This event had occaſioned him to quit his retired houſe at St. Ambroſe, in which he did not think himſelf in ſafety; and he took a ſmall manſion in the middle of the city, where he remained but a ſhort time; his love of ſolitude and repoſe ſoon induced him to ſeek a more retired habitation: he found one in the monaſtery of St. Simplicien, ſituated out of the walls. "I have here, ſays he, a long covered walk ſeparated from the fields by a narrow woody path, from whence I can go round the city without meeting any one: for ſuch is the ſolitude of this place, that you ſeem to be in the middle of a wood, if the view of the city in ſome parts, and the noiſe we ſometimes hear did not remind us we are near it."

Petrarch aſked one of the Monks for a life of St. Simplicien: "He brought me a book, ſays he, which the author had compiled from the confeſſions of St. Auguſtine, but in a very flat and

injudicious manner. I threw it aſide in anger; but it brought to my mind a good ſaying, 'The glory of ſaints depends not upon the eloquence of biographers. Thoſe ſaints want not the pen of mortals, who are written in the book of life.' But if we ſuppoſe a good writer capable of the work, who wiſhes to animate the living, rather than honour the dead, where will he meet with facts, if we find none in the houſe of the ſaint himſelf? It is only from the teſtimony of St. Auguſtine we learn that Simplicien was, all his life, a faithful ſervant of God, well verſed in the duties of an evangelical life; that he contributed to his converſion, and was choſen to ſucceed St. Ambroſe, by the direction of that great ſaint. This is all I could diſcover of my ſacred hoſt; God knows the reſt."

A PHYSICIAN, called Albin de Canobio, who was fond of Petrarch, wrote to invite him to his country-houſe at the foot

foot of the Alps. The air of Milan was become infectious: "Come hither, ſays Albin, the air is very good, and you will have always near you a phyſician and a friend." Petrarch replied: "It becomes not one of my age to fly from death: it is needleſs ſo to do, becauſe it comes every where. I would ſooner viſit you as my friend than my phyſician. The art of phyſic may be uſeful to preſerve health, and cure leſſer diſorders; but in violent diſeaſes it is of little uſe: we ſee phyſicians themſelves deſpair and run away, which proves the ignorance or the weakneſs of men."

Gui Settimo was appointed this year, 1359, to the Archbiſhopric of Genoa. As he was extremely beloved, it cauſed great joy in Genoa. Petrarch wrote to congratulate him: "I know not, ſaid he, whether I ſhould rejoice or grieve for your exaltation; you will have more honour and revenue, but you will loſe

that freedom you are ſo fond of. But why do I ſay this? You did not enjoy liberty, you was the ſervant of the public, you are now the ſervant of God; your condition is to be rejoiced in."

HE was ſcarcely ſettled in his new dignity, which brought him back with ſuch honour to his country, when he was attacked with violent fits of the gout, and begged Petrarch to write him ſome conſolations againſt pain, aſſuring him that he ſuffered with patience. Petrarch anſwered him with his uſual ſpirit and philoſophy, and then adds: "I would have ſent you my remedies of good and bad fortune, but I have no perſon at preſent who can copy it. The young man whom we have both taken ſo much pains with, that he might be the honour, relief, and joy of my old age, overwhelms me with ſhame and grief. This is contrary to my former predictions: alas! they muſt be now effaced; he is the ſlave of his paſ-

ſions,

ſions, envious, and diſobedient; he hates knowledge and virtue. But we muſt ſuffer all things with patience. Auguſtus, eſteemed the happieſt of men, did not he lament the giving birth to three poiſons? I, that have but one, ſhould do wrong to complain."

This ſon of Petrarch did every thing he could to obtain his father's forgiveneſs, and to be received into his houſe; he acknowledged his faults, and promiſed to correct them. Petrarch wrote him a very ſharp letter, in which he refuſes to receive him then, but that he ſhould be ready to do it when he gave proofs of his reformation. In effect, he permitted him ſoon after this to return home, and appears as much rejoiced as his ſon at this re-union.

In 1360, Galeas Viſcomti removed from Milan to Pavia; the cruelties of his brother had rendered his ſociety inſupportable. He embelliſhed his new city, 1360.

and rendered it a very agreeable and magnificent ſituation: Petrarch often paſſed a part of the ſummer with him there. He built a citadel of aſtoniſhing ſize, and at an immenſe expence; a covered bridge over the Teſin, ornamented with marble, which is ſtill the favourite walk of the Pavians; and he made a fine park, which was twenty miles in circumference, and ſtored it with deer and game of all ſorts. He eſtabliſhed an univerſity for all the ſciences, engaged able profeſſors, and ordered all his ſubjects to ſend their children to ſtudy there. All that he did was great; and Petrarch ſays of him, referring to the citadel of Pavia, "Galeas ſurpaſſed other men in moſt things, but in the magnificence of his buildings he ſurpaſſed himſelf."

THIS year Nicholas Acciajoli, who had been for ſome time at the court of Avignon, where he was on a public buſineſs from the King of Hungary, was

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ſent by the Pope to Milan, to negociate a peace with Barnabas, who had invaded Bologna. The grand Senechal was extremely deſirous to ſee Petrarch, who gives this account of their interview to Zanobi: "Your Mæcenas is come to treat with my Auguſtus, and has been twice to ſee me: neither the number of viſits, the multitude of affairs, nor the diſtance, could prevent him. This great man came to my remote dwelling, and entered into my little houſe, as Pompey entered into that of the philoſopher Poſſidonius; the faſces downward, the head uncovered, bowing with reſpect. What could an inhabitant of Parnaſſus do more, was he to enter into the temple of Apollo and the Muſes? This generous humility moved me, and ſome perſons of diſtinction who followed him, almoſt to tears: ſuch was the majeſty of his air, the ſoftneſs of his manners, the dignity of his language, preceded by a ſilence more expreſſive than words! We converſed

verſed upon all ſubjects, and ſpoke of you in particular. He examined my books with condeſcenſion, ſtaid a long time, and went away with concern. He has honoured my dwelling ſo much, that not only Romans and Florentines, but every lover of the ſciences pays homage to it. His preſence, his noble countenance has ſpread joy and peace in this royal city: he has compleated the favour he always expreſſed for me, and his preſence has raiſed rather than diminiſhed the idea I had of him. How happy are you to have ſuch a friend! Adieu! Do not forget me."

THE diſpute about Bologna between the Pope and Barnabas Viſcomti was more violent than ever, and a proceeding was commenced againſt the latter. Galeas was not to be included in it, on condition he ſhould not aid his brother. Galeas conſented, having in view an alliance

liance with France, and being very unwilling to break with the Pope.

King John was ſtill a priſoner at London; the truce was expired between the French and Engliſh. Edward entered France with a powerful army, perſuaded that nothing could reſiſt him; and that before the end of the campaign he ſhould become maſter of that kingdom. He laid ſiege to Rheims, but was obliged to raiſe it, and approached Paris, where he ſent to defy the regent to battle, and ravaged the country around it; but his army being ſtraitned for proviſion, he removed toward Chartres. On a ſudden there aroſe ſo terrible a ſtorm, accompanied with thunder and hail ſtones of ſuch a prodigious ſize, that it cruſhed to death both men and horſes; and ſo violent a rain deluged the camp, that a thouſand ſoldiers, and ſix thouſand horſes were buried in it. The violence of the winds, and the rapidity of the torrents

torrents carried all before them. The Engliſh hiſtorian ſays, that the troops looked upon this ſtorm as a mark of God's wrath, and that the King himſelf was of this opinion. It is affirmed that he turned toward the church of Chartres, and made a vow to conſent to peace, which was concluded ſome time after. One of the articles of it was, that king John ſhould pay three millions of gold crowns for his ranſom, ſix hundred thouſand at Calais, four months after his arrival; and four hundred thouſand every year till all ſhould be paid. The performance of this agreement was very difficult. France was deſolated, and without reſources. Money did not circulate: thoſe who had any concealed it: all ſorts of means were employed to bring it forth. The good cities taxed themſelves; the Financiers and Jews were laid under contribution; and the Pope granted two tenths from the clergy. Philip de Comines ſpeaks of leather money being uſed at this

this time, with a nail of ſilver in the middle.

Galeas Viscomti took advantage of John's embarraſſing ſituation, to demand his daughter Iſabella for John Galeas, his ſon. Hiſtorians aſſure us this honour coſt him dear. Villani ſays, the King ſold his daughter for ſix hundred thouſand florins; and makes a ſingular reflection on this ſubject. "When we conſider the grandeur of France, who would have imagined, that by the attacks of a king of England, a petty monarch in compariſon, its King ſhould be reduced to ſell his own fleſh as at a public auction."

Isabella was twelve years old, and John Galeas not eleven, but of ripe underſtanding for that age. When he was but five years old, being in his father's court, in the midſt of the great perſons aſſembled, he was obſerved to examine

their

their faces and appearance very attentively; his father aſked him which he thought the wiſeſt perſon there; after looking again at every one of them, he went to Petrarch, took him by the hand and brought him to his father.

ISABELLA made her entrance into Milan, the 8th of October, 1360, attended by the Count of Savoy. She was dreſſed in royal habits, received all the honours paid to queens, and had a royal court; at which no ladies appeared before her with any covering on their heads. This ceremony laſted till the celebration of the marriage, when ſetting this royalty aſide, ſhe did homage to the Viſcomti's and their wives. The marriage was celebrated with the greateſt magnificence; the Viſcomti's invited all the lords of Italy, who came to it with all readineſs, and brought their wives along with them. The rejoicings laſted three days, and were concluded by a ſumptuous feaſt given by Barnabas;

Barnabas; ſix hundred ladies, and more than a thouſand lords, were ſerved at tables of three courſes with the greateſt elegance and profuſion. There were every day tournaments, where they prepared booths for the ladies, whoſe fine dreſſes, with the pompous ornaments of the knights, and the vaſt concourſe of princes, nobles, and people of all nations, formed all together a moſt ſuperb ſpectacle.

Petrarch ſet out for Paris when theſe rejoicings were over, as ambaſſador from Galeas Viſcomti, to compliment king John on his return to, and on the recovery of his kingdom. Petrarch gives this account of the dreadful condition of France:

"When I viewed this kingdom, which had been deſolated by fire and ſword, I could not perſuade myſelf it was the ſame I had formerly beheld fertile,

tile, rich, and flouriſhing. On every ſide it now appeared a dreadful deſart; extreme poverty, lands untilled, fields laid waſte, houſes gone to ruin, except here and there one that was defended by ſome fortification, or which was encloſed within the walls: every where were ſeen the traces of the Engliſh, and the dreadful havock they had made. Touched by ſuch mournful effects of the rage of man, I could not withhold my tears."

"I AM not among thoſe whoſe love of their own country cauſes them to hate or deſpiſe all the reſt of the world. As I approached Paris, it appeared with that melancholy, diſfigured air, as if it ſtill dreaded the horrors it had been a prey to: and the Seine, which bathes its walls, wept over its late miſeries, and ſhrunk at the idea of new diſaſters. Where, ſaid I, is Paris now? Where are its riches, its public joy, its crowds of ſcholars diſputing even in the ſtreets? To

the buz of their ſyllogiſms has ſucceeded the din of arms, troops of guards, and machines of war: in the ſtead of libraries, we behold nothing but arſenals: and Tranquillity, who formerly reigned here as in her own temple, is now baniſhed and fled from this unhappy land. The ſtreets are deſerted; the highways covered with weeds and brambles; the whole is one vaſt deſart."

Preparations were making at this time for the re-entrance of king John into his kingdom. He came firſt to Calais, and from thence ſet out for Paris. Petrarch relates a circumſtance of this journey, not in other hiſtorians. The King and his ſon, ſays he, in traverſing Picardy, were ſtopped by thoſe troops of banditti who were ſoldiers of all nations united under ſeveral chiefs and called companies, who ravaged the whole kingdom; and they were obliged to make a treaty with them to continue their jour-

ney in ſafety. The King made his entrance into Paris in December 1360. Villani ſays, he was received with great honours, and that the city preſented him with a thouſand marks in ſilver plate.

THE ſtreets were carpeted, and the King walked under a canopy of cloth of gold. He went immediately to the church of Notre Dame, to return thanks to God, where ever ſince the battle of Poitiers a wax-light was kept burning night and day before the altar of the Virgin. They ſaid, it was rolled round a wheel, and in length would have comprehended the city of Paris.

PETRARCH having witneſſed the joy of the Pariſians, went to compliment the King on his deliverance, in the name of the Lords of Milan. John, who knew his reputation, and had heard him much ſpoken of by the cardinal of Bologna, was happy to ſee him, and gave him a very

very diſtinguiſhed reception. This Prince, though brought up by his father in ignorance, loved letters and wiſe men; but his ſon Charles, to whom he had given for his preceptor the moſt learned man in his kingdom, was a prince of great genius and fine taſte. Petrarch was aſtoniſhed to find in him a mind ſo highly cultivated; he admired his perfect politeneſs of manners, and the wiſdom and moderation with which he converſed on the moſt important ſubjects. He only ſays of king John, that he was brave and humane.

Most of Petrarch's friends whom he had gained at Paris in 1333 were dead; but he had the happineſs to find Peter le Berchier ſtill alive, that wiſe Benedictine he had known at Avignon, and who viſited him at Vaucluſe. This monk was prior of St. Elay, and as he held a diſtinguiſhed rank among men of letters, he rendered Petrarch's reſidence at Paris very

agreeable to him. In a diſcourſe which the latter held with the King and the Dauphin he ſaid, it was not to be wondered at, that fortune, who diverts herſelf with all things human, ſhould reduce a flouriſhing kingdom, formerly the object of envy, to ſo miſerable a condition. The king and the Dauphin fixed their eyes upon him with ſurpriſe, when they heard him ſpeak of fortune as a real being: the Dauphin, who had a lively imagination, was curious to know what Petrarch thought of fortune; and he ſaid to Peter le Berchier and ſome other perſons there, "Petrarch and his colleagues are to dine here to-day; we muſt attack him after dinner, and get him to explain himſelf on the ſubject of fortune." One of his friends warned him of the Dauphin's intention. Petrarch had no books with him, but he collected his thoughts and propoſed to repreſent fortune as a being of reaſon, and not a divinity who governed

the world at pleaſure, which was the common opinion of this age.

After dinner the King was ſo occupied with doing the honours of his court to the ambaſſadors from Milan, that to the great regret of the Dauphin, he was prevented from diſcourſing with Petrarch. When the court broke up, Peter le Berchier and three other learned men, not named by Petrarch, went home with him and entered upon a converſation which laſted till veſpers.

In the beginning of February 1361, Petrarch in haſte to return to Italy, went to take leave of the King and the Dauphin. They expreſſed extreme regret at his departure, and made ſome attempts to retain him at their court. The Dauphin preſſed it in particular, and wiſhed ardently to have a man of Petrarch's merit near him. But neither their arguments nor offers had any effect; he

loved his country too well, and the court of France was too illiterate for him. King John, though he loved letters, had hardly twenty books in his library: his reign and that of his ſon was the period of their revival in France. Peter le Berchier was engaged to tranſlate Livy; this work was much admired, though never printed: there is a copy of it with very pretty drawings in water colours in the library of the Sorbonne. Jane dutcheſs of Burgundy, the niece of the Cardinal of Bologna, who was ſecond wife to Philip de Valois, concurred with John in the tranſlation of ſeveral works. This princeſs, who had as much wit as beauty, died this year: if ſhe had lived longer, ſhe would have done much towards the revival of letters. Jane of Bourbon, wife of Charles the Vth, followed her ſteps; it was ſhe who engaged Philip de Vitry, the friend of Petrarch, to tranſlate into French verſe the Metamorphoſes of Ovid.

Peter le Berchier's beſt work was his tranſlation of Livy, in which it ſeems probable he was aſſiſted by Petrarch. He compoſed another work called a Moral Reductory, a ſort of Encyclopedia, where, in the taſte of this age, every thing is allegorically repreſented, and ends with a moral; one paſſage may ſerve for an idea of it. He ſays, 'that at Orange the Frogs never croak except one, and the reaſon of this is, St. Florent biſhop of that city, fatigued with the noiſe of theſe animals, commanded them to be ſilent; but afterwards touched with compaſſion he allowed them all to croak again. The clerk, who was to carry this permiſſion to the frogs, gave it in the ſingular inſtead of the plural, and ſo but one poor frog was ever heard in that city.' I have mentioned the romance of the roſe, a famous work of this age in the ſame ſtyle. There was alſo a hiſtory of the three Marys, full of abſurd fables. An Abbe publiſhed, in three

dreams, the pilgrimage of human life, the pilgrimage of the ſoul when ſeparated from the body, and the pilgrimage of Jeſus Chriſt.

FROM this view of letters in France we cannot be ſurpriſed at Petrarch's refuſing to ſtay in it; he quitted the Dauphin however with regret, and preſented him with his Treatiſe on good and bad Fortune, which the Prince had immediately tranſlated by his Preceptor; and this book held a diſtinguiſhed rank in his library, which was ſaid to contain nine hundred volumes; a prodigious number, at a time when books were ſo ſcarce.

1361. PETRARCH ſet out for Milan at the end of February. In the bad inns he met with, it was his cuſtom to write to his friends; and recollecting the converſations he had had with Peter le Berchier, he wrote him the following letter:

"IN

"In my youth, the inhabitants of Great Britain, whom they call Engliſh, were the moſt cowardly of all the Barbarians, inferior even to the vile Scotch. On the contrary, the French militia was then in the moſt flouriſhing ſtate. At preſent the Engliſh, become a warlike people, have ſubdued the French by frequent and unlooked for ſucceſſes. Would you know in two words the cauſe of this change? Liſten to Salluſt; he ſays 'Fortune changes with manners, and empire goes from the wicked to the good, ſtrength, genius, virtue, renown, circulate like money, and paſs from one people to another."

Petrarch then deſcribing the luxury of the French, gives this picture of their militia:

"When you enter into the camp, you would believe yourſelf in a tavern. They are even delicate, and will be drunk with

with foreign wines; and when there are none, they complain that the army wants for every thing, that they are dying with drought, and it is no wonder that the ſoldiers deſert. The military emulation has paſſed from arms to glaſſes: it is no longer the queſtion, with what weapons they ſhall fight, but with what glaſſes they ſhall drink; thoſe who can take off the largeſt draughts, and bear the moſt wine, are victors, and gain the laurel crown. Seneca predicted this: 'There ſhall come a day, ſays he, when drunkenneſs ſhall be honourable, and it will be eſteemed a virtue to excel in it.' Thus they abide in their tents, eating, drinking, playing, ſnoring, and ſwearing, and plunged in debauchery with the women who follow the camp. If called out to fight, they know no chief, obey no command, but run here and there without order, like bees that have loſt their hive, fawning, cowardly, ignorant, and boaſting: when called upon to attack

tack the foe, they do nothing for glory, or from valour, but are wholly ſwayed by intereſt, vanity, and the love of pleaſure."

Petrarch adds to this, an account of the ſeverity of diſcipline among the Romans, and that from the time it began to relax they may date their overthrow.

Some months after writing this letter, he ſent it by a Monk who was going to France, having had no opportunity before, who found Peter le Berchier juſt dead in his priory at Elay.

This year the empreſs Ann was delivered of a ſon. The joy of the Emperor was ſo great, that inſtead of the avarice generally imputed to his character, he diſtributed gold by handfuls, and made preſents to all the world. He ſent ſixteen marks of gold to Aix-la-Chappelle, which was the weight of the child, to

put

put him under the protection of the holy Virgin, patroneſs of the church, which Charlemagne had built in that city. He loved Petrarch too well to forget him on this occaſion. He ſent him a golden cup of admirable workmanſhip, and a very affectionate letter with it, preſſing him to come and live in his court. Petrarch replies to theſe great favours:

"YOUR letter is conceived in terms too condeſcending for your rank, and too high for my condition; the cup, valuable in itſelf, and ſtill more ſo for its high workmanſhip, is a preſent worthy of you, but unmerited by me. Who will not be aſtoniſhed to ſee transferred to my uſe a vaſe conſecrated by the mouth of Cæſar? But I ſhall take care not to profane this ſacred cup, by applying it to my own uſe: I would deſtine it to make libations on altars, if this antient rite was ſtill obſerved among us. It will be the delight and ornament of my table on ſolemn days,

and

and when I give feaſts, my friends ſhall behold it with pleaſure. I ſhall preſerve it all my life with your letter, as a monument of your goodneſs and of my glory. You propoſe a very agreeable journey to me, but I cannot quit Italy without the conſent of the maſter under whoſe law I live: but my greateſt obſtacle is my library, which without being immenſe is much above my genius and knowledge; how will my books be able to traverſe the Alps, infeſted as they are by thieves? The longer I live, the more I feel the truth of that ſaying, 'All is trouble and vexation of ſpirit:' he who doubts it, has only to live to a certain term of years, and he will be perfectly convinced of its truth. Nevertheleſs, I deſign to obey your orders before the ſummer is over, if my maſter permits, and I find a companion for my journey; and I will remain what time you pleaſe in your court. The preſence of my Cæſar will

will conſole me for the abſence of my books, my friends, and my country."

THIS letter of Petrarch's is dated from Padua, where he was now fixed. Probably this removal was owing to the plague, which ravaged the Milaneſe, and to the inroads of troops of robbers, called the companies, many of whom were diſbanded troops not paid, who had pillaged France, and were now come into the provinces of Italy under ſeveral different chiefs, ſome of whom were in league with the great men in power, who either from fear or intereſt connived at theſe diſorders. Petrarch laments the diſtreſſes they occaſioned in a very pathetic manner. It is eaſy to imagine what deſolation muſt ariſe from villains familiar with blood, and bound by no law either human or divine. A Milaneſe hiſtorian ſays, "They ravaged the lands, killed the men, forced the women before the eyes of their huſbands, violated the

daughters

daughters in the preſence of their parents, and reduced all around them to aſhes."

What was Petrarch's grief to behold all theſe diſtreſſes in his dear country! "I ſpeak, ſays he, becauſe I cannot keep ſilence; it is ſome conſolation to my heart to vent its ſorrows, though I know I ſpeak in vain. Yet who can tell? Though my words are caſt into the air, ſome favourable wind may convey them to a beneficent ear, where they may become fruitful. Alas! I deſire, more than I hope, this; for there remains nothing now to hope. Great God! thy regards formerly rendered us the moſt envied of mortals, the moſt illuſtrious of men! A handful of Romans went every where diſplaying their victorious ſtandards; to the Eaſt, to the Weſt, to the North, and to the South: there ſubduing pride, here confining ambition; reprimanding voluptuouſneſs in one land, and leaving the moſt glorious traces of their footſteps in

all.

all. The whole world acknowledged Rome as its chief, and fell proſtrate before her. Now, a troop of banditti ruſhing from a thouſand different retreats, ſpreads devaſtation over this queen of provinces, this miſtreſs of the world!"

"ALL-POWERFUL God! Thou art the laſt and the greateſt hope of man. Thou haſt created, and thou governeſt the world by thy power. *If we have not* anſwered thy goodneſs, puniſh and diſgrace us: if proſperity has rendered us proud, let thy arm make us humble: but ſuffer us not to be a prey to theſe wretches, and our yoke their portion. Good Lord! oppoſe thy ſupreme defence to the torrent of their wickedneſs and cruelty; confound that impious people who ſay in their heart, 'There is no God.' Aſſiſt thy children, who are indeed unworthy, but who invoke thy aid with tears, and truſt in God alone."

THE

THE occaſion of their leaving France 1362.
for Italy, was not only the Pope's money, and the ſolicitations of the Marquis de Montferrat, but alſo the plague, which was returned with ſuch violence to the city of Avignon, that between the 29th of March, and the 25th of July, there periſhed ſeventeen thouſand perſons, among whom were nine Cardinals, a hundred Biſhops, and a great number of officers belonging to the Roman court: it came after the famine which the city of Avignon ſuffered from the invaſion of the companies.

HISTORIANS remark, that more perſons of condition periſhed in this plague, than in that of 1348: but it was not ſo general, nor of ſuch long continuance. It was brought into Italy by the companies. The city of Milan, which the former plague had reſpected, was worſe treated by this than any other: Villani ſays, there died in it every day a thouſand,

twelve hundred, and ſome days fourteen hundred people. All the great lords abandoned it. Galeas Viſcomti went to Monza. Barnabas ſhut himſelf up in his fine caſtle at Marignan; a place ſurrounded with woods, in a very pure air, and which he had carefully guarded: that no one might come near it, he placed a centinel in the bell-tower, who had orders to ring when any one ſhould appear on horſeback. Some Milaneſe gentlemen having entered Marignan, and the bell not ſounding, Barnabas ſent his ſoldiers in a violent rage, with orders to throw the centinel immediately from the top of the tower; but when they came, they found him dead at the bottom of it: Barnabas, in the utmoſt terror at this news, fled into the thickeſt part of the foreſt, and lay a long while there for dead.

THE plague had not yet reached Padua, but was very ſevere at Parma. The ſon of Petrarch was one of its victims.

Petrarch

Petrarch would have been much leſs touched with his death on his own account, had it happened ſooner; for this young man had expreſſed ſo much grief for his miſconduct, and appeared ſo true a penitent, that Petrarch was well-pleaſed with his penitence, and ſincerely lamented his loſs. He had juſt gained for him a benefice beſtowed by the lord of Verona. In a letter to a friend he ſays:

"Death takes my friends as uſual, while I march cheerfully on. Your lord has reſtored the benefice about which you took ſo much pains: but death has taken it from me, and the young man who was to poſſeſs it; he died the ſame day he was to have been re-eſtabliſhed in his rights. I am thus delivered of a great burden, but it is not without grief. Adieu!"

It was upon this that Petrarch determined to marry Frances his daughter.

It is no where ſaid in his works where ſhe lived or was brought up. He choſe for her the ſon of a gentleman of Milan, a moſt accompliſhed and amiable young man, of the ſweeteſt temper and the beſt diſpoſitions. Boccace ſays of him, "His figure was ſtriking, his countenance calm and agreeable, his converſation diſcreet, and his behaviour gentle and polite." Frances had an agreeable figure, and reſembled her father in perſon. She was ſubmiſſive and faithful to her huſband. Simplicity, modeſty, attachment to the duties of her ſtation, and a contempt of the pleaſures of the world, formed her amiable character. Two ſuch friends were delightful ſociety for Petrarch; he took them into his houſe, and this affectionate union was uninterrupted to his death.

BOOK VI.

THE plague which raged this year, 1361, with violence, carried off Zanobi de Strata, who enjoyed his place of Apoſtolic Secretary only three years. The grand Senechal, who had the tendereſt friendſhip for him, and the greateſt idea of his talents, could hardly ſupport this ſtroke. "The world, ſays he, has loſt a man who has not had his equal for a thouſand years: I except only Signior Francis Petrarch." The grand Senechal offered to Simonides, the Prior of the holy Apoſtles, the place Zanobi held under him at Naples, and with many intreaties, engaged him to accept it. He had not on this occaſion conſulted Petrarch; but when he arrived at Naples, he wrote him the following letter.

"You will be aſtoniſhed at receiving a letter from me here, and at my long ſilence, which has been occaſioned by a variety of affairs." He invites Petrarch to come to him. He was then at a country-houſe of the grand Senechal's, of which he gives this fine deſcription. "Do you ſeek ſolitude? Here are deſarts that ſeem to have been contrived for poets, by art and nature united. Do you wiſh the chearful ſociety of cities to unbend from ſtudies? You have Amalphi to the right, Salerno to the left. Do you love the ſea? you are on its banks near enough to throw in your nets, and count the fiſh they incloſe. I ſpeak not of the fine gardens all around, exceeding in neatneſs and beauty all the reſt of Italy. In the middle of a delightful valley, a river rolls its tranſparent waters, with an agreeable murmur over the ſhining pebbles. The magnificent villas, ſcattered on all ſides, appear to riſe out of the rocks, rather than to have been the

work

work of man. The air is delightfully temperate, and the land produces every year fruits of moſt exquiſite taſte. In ſhort, here is every thing that can delight the ſenſes, ſpringing upon the ſpot, and brought from other countries, both by land and by ſea."

The grand Senechal joined his intreaties to thoſe of Simonides, to which Petrarch replied;

I have learnt with pleaſure that you are in Campania; my better half then, as Horace ſays of Virgil, is there alſo, provided you are happy: but how ſhould you be otherwiſe, with ſuch a hoſt as our common Mæcenas, with a mind like yours, and thoſe virtues which follow you to every clime? I need no temptations to accept your offers: your requeſts, and thoſe of your Mæcenas, would be my only inducements; but I wonder you are not fatigued with aſking what I am

weary of refuſing: I can only beg you to recollect what I have ſaid a thouſand times on this ſubject." The charge of Apoſtolic ſecretary, through the influence of the Cardinal de Taillerand, was again offered to Petrarch, with additional advantages annexed, and the moſt ardent ſolicitations he would accept it; but he perſiſted in his refuſal: in which he notices very keenly the Pope's opinion of him as a ſorcerer, and recommends Simonides and Boccace as more worthy of the office.

"PARDON me, ſays he in a letter to the former, if I have done wrong in naming you; if you accept this employment, you will procure wealth and fame; if you refuſe it, the refuſal will do you honour; as they have thought me capable of it, they will ſuppoſe me alſo a judge of this capacity in others: whether they deſpiſe or concur with my judgment, I have ſeized this occaſion of ſaying what

I think of you; and though it would be more in character another ſhould have told you this, I have not deferred writing that you might have time to prepare your anſwer. I have not forgot to join with your praiſe, that of your Mæcenas, and that to him they muſt addreſs themſelves if they wiſh to obtain you. What idea ought they not to have of a man who raiſes up ſuch ſubjects for the church as yourſelf and Zanobi. This glory reflects alſo on our country, which produces both the one and the other."

At the beginning of the year 1362, the plague deprived Petrarch of his beloved friend Socrates. "He was, ſays he, of all men the deareſt to my heart; my firſt, my darling friend: from the firſt hour we met, we loved with mutual tenderneſs. His ſentiments and diſpoſitions toward me have never varied during the ſpace of one and thirty years: a rare and aſtoniſh-

aſtoniſhing thing to ſay of a man born among Barbarians; but the habit of living with me, my ſociety and friendſhip had inſpired him with ſuch a taſte for our manners and opinions, that he was become a perfect Italian. Yes, he was our Socrates, the Socrates of Italy: and his ſingular transformation was the joy and honour of my life, and the admiration of all the world!"

THE plague and war rendered Italy at this time ſo diſagreeable to Petrarch, that he had reſolved on a journey to Vaucluſe, as ſoon as the ſevere froſts would permit him to paſs the Alps. But when he came to Milan, he found it impaſſable. Barnabas was come out of his den, and had again attacked Bologna. The plague had enriched his coffers, becauſe he had taken poſſeſſion of the eſtates and wealth of thoſe who died without heirs. Become prouder than ever, he made exorbitant demands to the Pope, who engaged in a league with

with ſeveral of the Italian Princes againſt him. Barnabas hearing of it ſaid; they are children, I will have them all whipt.

The Emperor of Germany ſent to Petrarch, at this time, a third invitation in very pompous and flattering terms, which Petrarch promiſed to accept, but was prevented by the impoſſibility of a ſafe paſſage. The grand Senechal of Naples wrote alſo to Petrarch, to thank him for his attention to Simonides; in his letter he ſays, "Since Providence permits me not to obtain what I have long wiſhed for, I beſeech you earneſtly, my maſter and my friend, the honour of my country, that you judge me worthy of your admirable letters, which will not only render my name honourable to poſterity, but the few days of life that remain to me delightful to myſelf."

In Petrarch's anſwer, he mentions the

the death of Lewis king of Naples, and how little honour he did to the advice given him through Nicholas Acciajoli: "We may ſay with reaſon, adds he, that virtue is not obtained by precepts. This Prince had little dignity, and leſs authority; he had neither knowledge nor prudence, and gloried in deceit. He loved a debauched life, and was avaricious of money to an extreme: he often ſuſpected his greateſt friend the Senechal; but had recourſe to him in every critical conjuncture. He ſlighted the queen his wife, and treated her as one of his ſubjects; and he tired all around him with the detail of his great actions, both in peace and war."

Boccace hearing that Petrarch propoſed going to Germany, was much alarmed, and reproached him for his intention of dragging the Muſes into Sarmatia, when Italy was the only true Parnaſſus. In this letter he gives Petrarch an account

count of a ſingular adventure which had juſt happened to him.

"A Carthusian of Sienna, whom I know not, came to me at Florence, and aſked to ſpeak to me in private. I came hither, ſays he, from the deſire of the bleſſed father Petroni, a Carthuſian of Sienna, who, though he never ſaw you, by the illumination of heaven knows you thoroughly: he charged me to repreſent to you your extreme danger, unleſs you reform your manners, and your writings, which are the inſtruments the devil uſes to draw men into his ſnares, to tempt them to ſinful luſts, and to promote the depravity of their conduct. Ought you not to bluſh for ſuch an abuſe of the talents God has given you for his glory? What a reward might you have obtained, had you made a good uſe of that wit and eloquence with which he has endowed you! on the contrary, what ought you not to fear, for devoting yourſelf to love,

and

and waging war with modeſty, by giving leſſons of libertiniſm both in your life and writings! The bleſſed Petroni, celebrated for his miracles, and the ſobriety of his life, ſpeaks to you by my voice. He charged me in his laſt moments to beſeech and exhort you, in the moſt ſacred manner, to renounce poetry, and thoſe profane ſtudies, which have been your conſtant employment, and prevented your diſcharging your duty as a chriſtian. If you do not follow my directions, be aſſured you have but a ſhort time to live, and that you ſhall ſuffer eternal puniſhments after your death. God has revealed this to father Petroni, who gave me a ſtrict charge to inform you of it."

THE Carthuſian who ſpoke thus to Boccace, was called Joachim Cianī; he was the country-man and friend of father Petroni, who died in a religious rapture, May, 1361; and it was ſaid, wrought ſeveral miracles before and after

his death. Father Ciani was with him when he was on his death-bed, and heard him utter ſeveral predictions concerning different perſons, among whom was Petrarch. Boccace, terrified at what Father Ciani had ſaid, aſked him how his friend came to know him and Petrarch, as they had no knowledge of his friend; to which the good Carthuſian replied: Father Petroni had reſolved to undertake ſomething for the glory of God, but death preventing him, he prayed to God with fervour to point out ſome one who ſhould execute his enterpriſe: his prayer was heard; Jeſus Chriſt appeared to him, and he ſaw written on his face, all that paſſes upon earth, the preſent, the paſt, and the future. After this he caſt his eyes upon me for the performance of this good work, and charged me with this commiſſion for you, with ſome others to Naples, France, and England, after which I ſhall go to Petrarch.

To

To convince Boccace of the truth of what he ſaid, the holy father acquainted him with a ſecret which Boccace thought none knew but himſelf. This diſcovery, and the threat that he had not long to live, impreſſed him ſo ſtrongly, that he was no longer the ſame man: ſeized with a panic terror, and believing death at his heels; he reformed his manners, renounced love and poetry; and determined to part with his library, which was almoſt entirely compoſed of profane authors. In this ſituation of his mind, he wrote to his maſter Petrarch, to give him an account of what had happened to him, of the reſolution he had made to reform his manners, and to offer him his library, giving him the preference to all others; and begging he would fix the price of the books, ſome of which might ſerve as a diſcharge of ſome debts he owed him. Petrarch's reply to this letter was as follows:

"To

"To ſee Jeſus Chriſt with bodily eyes, is indeed a wonderful thing! it only remains that we know if it is true. In all ages men have covered falſhoods with the veil of religion, that the appearance of divinity might conceal the human fraud. When I have myſelf beheld the meſſenger of Father Petroni, I ſhall ſee what faith is to be given to his words; his age, his forehead, his eyes, his behaviour, his cloaths, his motions, his manner of ſitting, his voice, his diſcourſe, and the whole united will ſerve to enlighten my judgment."

"As to what reſpects yourſelf, that you are not long for this world, if we reflect coolly this is a matter of joy, rather than of ſorrow. Was it an old man on the borders of the grave, one might juſtly ſay to him, do not at your years give yourſelf up to poetry, leave the Muſes and Parnaſſus, they only ſuit the days of youth. Your imagination is ex-

tinguiſhed, your memory fails, your feelings are loſt; think rather of death, who is at your heels, and prepare yourſelf for that awful paſſage. But for a man in the middle age of life, who has cultivated letters and the Muſes with ſucceſs from his youth, and who makes them his amuſement in riper years, to renounce them then is to deprive himſelf of a great conſolation. If this had been required of *Lactantius*, of St. Auguſtin, or St. *Jerome*; would the former have diſcovered the abſurdities of the heathen ſuperſtition; would St. Auguſtin with ſo much art have built up the city of God; or St. Jerome combated Heretics with ſo much ſtrength and ſucceſs? I know by experience, how much the knowledge of letters may contribute to produce juſt opinions; to render a man eloquent; to perfect his manners; and, which is much more important, to defend his religion. If men were not permitted to read poets and

heathen

heathen writers, becauſe they do not ſpeak of Jeſus Chriſt, whom they never knew; how much leſs ought they to read the works of Hereties, who oppoſe his doctrine; yet this is done with the greateſt care, by all the defenders of the faith. It is with profane authors as with ſolid food; it nouriſhes the man who has a good ſtomach, and is pernicious only to thoſe who cannot digeſt it; to the mind that is judicious they are wholeſome, but poiſon to the weak and ignorant. Letters may even render the former more religious, of which we have many examples, and to them they will never be an obſtacle to piety. There are many ways of arriving at truth and heaven; long, ſhort, clear, obſcure, high and low, according to the different neceſſities of men: but ignorance is the only road the idle walk in; ſurely wiſdom may produce as many ſaints as folly; and we ſhould be careful that we never com-

pare a lazy and blind devotion with an enlightened and induſtrious piety. If you reſolve, however, to part with your books, I will never ſuffer them to fall into baſe hands; though ſeparated in body, we are united in mind: I cannot fix any price upon them, and I will make only one condition with you, that we paſs the remainder of our lives together, and that you ſhall thus enjoy my books, and your own. Why do you ſpeak of debt to me? you owe me nothing but friendſhip, and herein we are equal, becauſe you have always rendered love for love. Be not, however, deaf to the voice of a friend who calls you to him. I cannot enrich you; if I could you would have been rich long ago; but I have all that is requiſite for two friends, who are united in heart, and ſheltered under the ſame roof."

IT was doubtleſs the Decameron of Boccace, which drew upon him the adventure we have related; it conſiſts of a hundred

hundred novels which are related as the amuſement of ſeven ladies and three gentlemen, who went to paſs ſome days in the country, two miles from Florence, to eſcape the infected air of that city. Among theſe novels there are ſome true ſtories that Boccace had been a witneſs of, or had learnt from good information; the reſt are only tales he had read, or heard of. He poſſeſſed the talent of ſtory-telling in perfection. Nothing can be more plain and natural, ſkilful, or elegant, than his compoſitions; his words ſeem formed on purpoſe for his deſcriptions. Men of wit in Italy agree that the Decameron exceeds in ſtyle every other book in their language; and that it is very remarkable that Boccace ſhould carry the vulgar tongue all at once to its perfection, which had been left to the people, and the ruſt of which had been but in part rubbed off by Dante.

No book, perhaps, had ever ſo many

readers, and ſo many cenſurers, as the Decameron: the devotees were for having it burnt, and the monks were enraged againſt him, becauſe he had taken many of his tales from the convents, and had ſeverely ſatirized their licentiouſneſs of manners: to attack the monks, ſaid they, is to attack religion itſelf; and to publiſh their infamy, is to be guilty of impiety. To this they added, that Boccace was an atheiſt. He did not take the pains to anſwer them ſeriouſly, but turns them into ridicule in a very pleaſant manner, at the end of his Decameron. He compoſed this work as an amuſement only, and was far from beholding it as the ground of his reputation: what would have been his aſtoniſhment if he had been told, "your other works will remain buried in obſcurity, while your Decameron will go through more than two hundred editions, will be tranſlated into all languages, and will be read by all the world!"

Boccace was not arrived at a mature age, when he compoſed the Decameron: its lively air was ſuited to tales, and its free repreſentations to the vices it cenſures; and at the time when he wrote it, the plague had made a great change in the manners and cuſtoms of ſociety; the women, of whom only a few remained, having moſt of them loſt their huſbands, their parents, and all who had authority over them; thought themſelves no longer ſubject to thoſe rigid decorums which formerly reſtrained their conduct. Having no perſons of their own ſex to attend them during the plague, they employed men as their ſervants; which introduced a violation of the laws of modeſty and reſerve. With reſpect to the convents, it is not ſurpriſing that Boccace ſhould find ſubjects in them for his licentious tales. The plague had opened their gates, and the monks and nuns coming forth into the world, and living without reſtraint, had loſt the

ſpirit of their profeſſion: and when the plague ceaſed, they continued the ſame courſe of life. The hiſtorians of thoſe times give us dreadful pictures of their debauchery; and the eccleſiaſtical writers look upon the plague of 1348, as the true period of the relaxation of monaſtic diſcipline.

THE Decameron gives an animated view of thoſe times, ſatirizes the vices that prevailed, and contains ſome lively images of human life, and very judicious repreſentations of the characters of men; but the judgment of Petrarch, reſpecting profane authors, may be very uſefully applied to the readers of this work: and it is probable this book did a good deal of miſchief in Italy, ſince the wiſe fathers of the council of Trent forbade the reading of it till it ſhould be corrected.

FATHER Ciani's viſit and converſation occaſioned

occaſioned ſo great a revolution in the mind of Boccace, that he was not only for renouncing poetry and Pagan authors, but it was reported he was going to turn Carthuſian, and a ſonnet on this ſubject was addreſſed to him by Franco Sacchetti, one of the beſt poets of that time. It appears that Petrarch's well-judged anſwer re-eſtabliſhed the peace of his mind, and made him renounce his chimerical projects; he kept his books, and continued his ſtudies; but it is certain he alſo reformed his life, and did all he could to ſuppreſs his Decameron; but that was impoſſible, there were too many copies of it ſpread abroad.

In the month of June 1362, the plague ſpread to Padua, and made ſuch havock there, that Petrarch removed to Venice; it had not yet reached to that city. Villani ſays, "It came like hail, which, after ravaging the fields to the right and to the left, ſpares thoſe in the middle."

The

The war did not permit Petrarch to go to France or Germany, and the plague drove him from Milan and Padua. Venice appeared to him the ſureſt aſylum againſt theſe two ſcourges. "I fled not from death, ſays he, but I ſought repoſe."

PETRARCH always took his books when he went any long journey, which rendered travelling ſo incommodious and expenſive to him, as he required for their conveyance ſuch a number of horſes. When he had been ſome time at Venice, it came into his mind not to offer theſe books to a religious order, as he once propoſed, but to place this treaſure in the care of the republic, to whom he wrote as follows:

"FRANCIS Petrarch deſires to have the bleſſed Evangeliſt Mark for the heir of thoſe books he has and may have, on condition that they ſhall neither be ſold nor

nor ſeparated; and that they ſhall be all placed in ſafety, ſheltered from fire and water, and preſerved with care for ever for his honour, and the uſe and amuſement of the noble and learned perſons of this city. If he makes this depoſit, it is not becauſe he has a great idea of his books, or believes he has formed a fine library; but he hopes by this means the illuſtrious city of Venice will acquire other truſts of the ſame kind from the public; that the citizens who love their country, the nobles above all, and even ſome ſtrangers will follow his example, and leave their books to this church at their death, which may one day become a great library, and equal thoſe of the ancients. Every one muſt ſee how honourable this will be to the republic. Petrarch will be much flattered with having been the original ſource of ſo great a good. If his deſign ſucceeds, he will explain himſelf more minutely hereafter

after upon this ſubject; in the mean time he offers to execute this his promiſe."

THIS propoſal having been examined and approved, and the procurators of the church of St. Mark having offered to be at the neceſſary expences for the placing and preſerving theſe books, the republic gave the following decree:

"CONSIDERING the offer that Meſſire Francis Petrarch has made us, whoſe reputation is ſo great, that we do not remember to have met in the Chriſtian world with a moral philoſopher and poet united, who can compare with him; perſuaded that this offer may contribute to the glory of God and of St. Mark, and do much honour to our city; we will accept it on the conditions he has made; and we order ſuch a ſum to be taken from our revenue, as will purchaſe him a houſe for his life, a [redacted] to the advice

advice of the governor, counſellors, and chiefs."

In compliance with this decree, Petrarch had aſſigned for his dwelling, and that of his books, a large manſion called the palace of the two towers, belonging to the family of Molina. It is at preſent the monaſtery of the Monks of St. Sepulcre.

This houſe was of an immenſe ſize, and had two very high towers. It was delightfully ſituated, fronting the port. Petrarch was delighted to behold the veſſels come in and go out: "Theſe veſſels, ſays he, reſemble a mountain ſwimming on the ſea, and go into all parts of the world amidſt a thouſand perils, to carry our wines to the Engliſh, our honey to the Scythians; our ſaffron, our oils, our linen to the Syrians, to the Armenians, to the Perſians, and the Arabians; and which is more incredible, they carry our woods

woods to the Achaians and Egyptians. From all theſe countries they bring merchandiſes, which they carry all over Europe. They go even to the Tanais: the navigation of our ſea extends no farther than that towards the North; but when they are there, they quit their ſhips, and go to trade in the Indies and to China, and after having paſſed the Ganges and the Caucaſus, they go by land as far as the Eaſtern ocean. Behold what men will do for the thirſt of gold!"

PETRARCH's view towards the republic was fulfilled; ſeveral Cardinals left their libraries to it after his example; and it appeared the beſt and ſafeſt perpetuation of many valuable authors: but by the humidity of the place, they were almoſt all deſtroyed, together with a precious manuſcript written by the evangeliſt St. Mark.

AT this time there happened a great event

event at Avignon, which diſconcerted all Petrarch's meaſures for his friend Simonides. Pope Innocent the VIth died the 12th of September 1362: he was a good and ſimple man. The Cardinals caſt their eyes on his brother Hugues Roger, a man of great worth, whoſe virtue and modeſty had gained him univerſal reſpect; but he refuſed this dignity. They then elected William Grimoard, Abbe of St. Victor. All the world was aſtoniſhed, and even the Cardinals themſelves, at the choice of a Pope who was not of the ſacred college. Petrarch ſays to Urban in a letter ſome time after, "It was the effect of divine inſpiration; it was God, not the Cardinals, elected you to the papacy, making the hands and tongues of men the inſtruments of his good pleaſure. Your name, adds he, was pronounced without their intention. Full of pride, they eſteem themſelves alone, and deſpiſe all others. Each one aſpires to the ſupreme dignity,

and

and thinks himſelf the only one who deſerves it: but as he cannot name himſelf, he elects another, from whom he expects the ſame return. How ſhould it come into their mind to beſtow on a ſtranger what they aimed at themſelves; to raiſe ſo high the chief of a ſimple monaſtery, though they had every proof of his holineſs and faith? How ſhould they think of placing over them as a maſter, the man whom they had been uſed to command? No: it was God who placed you in their ballots without their deſign. What muſt have been their ſurpriſe, and that of all the world, when they beheld an Abbe elected, while they were ſo many Cardinals who might pretend to the papacy!"

As William Grimoard was in Italy, the Cardinals ſent a courier to inform him of his election, and agreed to keep it ſecret till he had accepted it. He had been ſent to Naples with a compliment

of

of condolence to queen Jane on the death of king Lewis, and to watch over her conduct. He was at Florence, when he heard of the Pope's death; and when he went from thence, Villani assures us he said, "If I beheld a Pope who will re-establish the Holy See, and overthrow the tyrants, I should be content to die the day after." The courier having overtaken him on his rout, received his answer. He arrived himself at Avignon soon after, and was enthroned the next day by the name of Urban V. which he preferred to all others, because all who had borne that name were distinguished for their piety. Petrarch says, this choice proved the goodness of the Pope, and his design to shew kindness to all the world. At his coronation he forbade the cavalcade that used to pass through the city, though all was ready for it according to custom, because it appeared to him vain glorious. He was very learned in the canon law, had been employed by

Innocent in ſeveral public negociations, and had acquired ſo great a reputation for faith and piety that every one applauded this election.

KING John, who was at Villeneuve, made his entrance into Avignon, and dined with the new Pope. He took this occaſion to make him four demands; the tenths of the benefices for ſix years; the diſpoſal of the four firſt hats; the mediation of peace between the Holy See and Barnabas Viſcomti; and the conſent of the Pope for the marriage of his ſon Philip with Jane queen of Naples. Urban, with great ſkill, eluded all theſe demands. The King ſtaid at Villeneuve to the end of December. Nicholas Areme, who was in his train, pronounced a diſcourſe before the Pope and the Cardinals with great pathos, in which he draws a frightful picture of the manners of the Roman court. This gave him the honour of a place among

the witneſſes for the truth againſt the Popes.

Petrarch was full of joy at this exaltation, knowing the great qualities of the Pope, and his deſign to re-eſtabliſh the Holy See at Rome. He was again ſolicited by Urban to accept the place of ſecretary, ſtill vacant, but he continued immoveable. While he was rejoicing in this public event, he was informed of a private one that grieved him exceedingly; this was the death of Azon de Correge, who had been for ſome time in a languiſhing ſtate, but the ſtrength of his conſtitution had ſtruggled through every diſorder, till the plague put an end to his life. He left a widow of the houſe of Gonzagua, and two children, Gilbert and Lewis de Correge, who had been brought up by Modeo, that generous young man at Parma. They all wrote to Petrarch to acquaint him with their loſs, and to ſeek ſome conſolation in his

friendſhip. The children ſaid in their letter, "We look upon you at preſent as our Father and our maſter." "I accept, replied Petrarch, the firſt with pleaſure, though I merit not ſuch children as you are; but I reject the ſecond, which does not become me. Ever ſince you came into the world I have adopted you for my children, and revered you as my maſters. I have not changed my ſentiments, and I ſhall feel all my life for you as I have done for your father. I exhort and conjure you with tears in my eyes, to live in ſuch a manner, that the world may be able to ſay, that your father has left children worthy of him, and that inſtead of one friend and one maſter that I have loſt, I may gain in you two friends and two maſters reſembling him. This will be eaſy for you to accompliſh, if you are obedient to the counſels of your reſpectable mother, and ſubmiſſive to her orders."

In his letter to Modeo, Petrarch ſpeaks thus

thus of Azon's friendſhip for him; "He loved no one as he did me, and ſaid I was the only perſon who had never given him any cauſe of complaint, either by my words or actions: that he had ſometimes little domeſtic uneaſineſſes, even with his wife, that pious and amiable woman, and with his children, though gentle and obedient; but that his affection increaſed every day for me, and he intereſted himſelf tenderly in all my concerns."

"All who would obtain any thing of him, diſcloſed their errand, by firſt ſpeaking kindly of me. I found in him the aſſiſtance of a maſter, the advice of a father, the ſubmiſſion of a ſon, and the tenderneſs of a brother. I paſſed with him a great part of my life, every thing was common between us, good or bad fortune, the pleaſures of town or country: his glorious labours, his happy leiſure, nothing was excepted: when

we journeyed together he would expoſe his life for mine. Alas! why did he not take me with him in the laſt journey he will ever make."

THESE letters were tranſcribed from a manuſcript, in the Medicis library. The widow of Azon wrote alſo, but her letters are loſt. She was a lady of the greateſt merit. Soon after the death of her huſband, her brother Hugolin de Gonzagua, a man of great genius, and poſſeſſed of a moſt graceful perſon, was aſſaſſinated by his brothers, who were jealous of the authority his father had left him in at Mantua. "Petrarch ſays, I did not dare to touch upon this ſtring in my letter, the poor woman is afflicted enough already."

THE plague having gained Florence, Boccace went to Naples, where he was invited by Nicholas Acciajoli; but not enduring any dependence, he ſtayed but

a ſhort

a ſhort time with the grand Senechal at Amalphi, where he lived like a ſovereign Prince. He came to Venice to his friend Petrarch, who was rejoiced to ſee him, and ſhewed him every mark of friendſhip.

Boccace brought with him a man of a very ſingular character; he was a Greek of Theſſalonica, called Leonce Pilate; he gives us this deſcription of him. He had a very ugly face, and a terrifying countenance; he had a long beard, and ſtiff black hair, which he ſcarce ever combed. Plunged in continual meditation, he neglected all the rules of ſociety, was rude and clowniſh, without the leaſt civility, or good manners. But to make up for theſe defects, he was perfect in the Greek tongue, and his head was full of the Grecian hiſtory, and mythology; he had but a ſuperficial knowledge of the Latin; but, perſuaded it was honourable to claim a foreign

original; he called himſelf a Greek in Italy, and an Italian in Greece. Boccace met with him in 1360, going from Venice to Avignon: he took him to his houſe at Florence, and procured him a profeſſorſhip for the Greek language in that univerſity. Leonce explained the poems of Homer there for two years; and gave leſſons upon them in private to Boccace. This Greek was not unknown to Petrarch; Boccace had often ſpoken of him, and joined with him in a letter to Petrarch in the character of Homer; complaining that his works were very little known in Italy, and his name had hardly reached the Alps; and that even in his own country they had loſt a great part of them. He then ſpeaks of the ingratitude of his imitators, above all Virgil, who has not ſo much as named him, though ornamented with his ſpoils; that his name, revered in former times by lawyers and phyſicians, is at preſent the ſport of the public:

public: that Leonce Pilate has dragged him to Florence, where he is as it were exiled, having only three friends: he concludes by beſeeching Petrarch to take him under his protection, and ſhelter him from the inſults of the vulgar.

PETRARCH begins his anſwer with this addreſs:

"PETRARCH, little man, to the Prince of the Greek Muſe:" and then proceeds to anſwer his complaints. "As to the loſs of your books, this is the fate of all human things: and who ſhall complain hereafter in the ſame ſituation, ſince the ſun of eloquence has ſuffered an eclipſe? As to your imitators, always ſure of the firſt place, you ought to be pleaſed with thoſe who try to equal you, and fall ſo ſhort; for my own part, I wiſh for ſome who ſurpaſs me; as to Virgil, he had the moſt generous of ſouls, and if we believe Horace, was incapable of ingratitude.

gratitude. He has ſpoken of Theocritus in his Bucolics, and of Heſiod in his Georgics, whom he copied: how came he then not to ſpeak of you in his Æneid. It was becauſe he deſtined to you the moſt honourable place, and would conclude his poem with your eulogy. Death prevented him, of that alone you can complain."

"Do you forget the anſwer he made to thoſe who accuſed him of pillaging your verſes? "He muſt be ſtrong indeed, who can take the club from Hercules." You feel the ſalt of this reply. As to the contempt in which you have been held by ſome: there are perſons whom it is an honour to diſpleaſe; it happens to you as to the ſun; weak-eyed people and the birds of night cannot ſupport its luſtre: all who have poſſeſſed a ray of genius, have regarded you not only as a philoſopher, but as the firſt and moſt ſublime of philoſophers."

"You are not to wonder you have met with three friends only in Florence, a city immerſed in trade; but I am aſtoniſhed you ſhould call it an exile to be brought out of Greece into Italy. Conſider however, you will find a fourth, and we may add a fifth friend there, who have received the laurel crown: as the world goes, five friends in one city is ſomething to boaſt of. Look among the other cities, you find one at Bologna, the mother of ſcience, two at Verona, and one at Mantua, if he has not quitted your colours, to follow thoſe of Ptolemy. Peruſia produced but one lover of ſcience, and he abandoned Parnaſſus, the Apennine, and the Alps, to run about Spain. At Rome I know of none at preſent, but I knew many there and elſewhere formerly, who exiſt no longer upon earth. But are not perſons of this character rare even in your country? The friend who exiled you to Florence, is perhaps the only Greek attached

tached to you; you had another who was my preceptor, Borlaam the famous Greek, who died ſoon after I had obtained him a biſhoprick. You aſk my protection, and ſeek a refuge in my houſe; but what can I do for you when I cannot defend myſelf? If you were perſecuted through envy in the learned city of Athens, what can we hope for from theſe cities plunged in ignorance and voluptuouſneſs? Though I do not merit a gueſt like you, I am ſeeking your acquaintance with ardour; and if the Theſſalian perfects his inſtructions, I ſhall ſoon complete the friendſhip which I have ſo long deſired. I have prepared you a habitation in my inmoſt heart, nothing can equal the love and eſteem I have for you."

PETRARCH and Boccace paſſed the ſummer together in the moſt delightful manner. Benintendi, Chancellor of Venice, came frequently to viſit them in the evening when he had finiſhed his public affairs, and took them upon the water in his

his gondola; he was a man of letters, an excellent companion, and a ſincere friend and admirer of Petrarch. There were ſome other perſons of genius who joined this little refined ſociety; Donat de Albanzani and Peter de Muglo; the former was a grammarian, born in the mountains of the Apennine, a man of very amiable diſpoſitions and agreeable converſation: he was poor, ſays Boccace, but full of honour, and one of my beſt friends. The latter was a celebrated rhetorician; he was formerly a profeſſor at Padua, and called himſelf the ſcholar of Petrarch; in his old age he went to Bologna, and had for his pupil the famous Coluccio Salutati.

The affairs of Boccace required his return to Florence; and when he heard the plague was leſs violent he left Venice. Petrarch, who loved him affectionately, feared the air was not yet purified, and was extremely grieved at his departure.

Boccace would have taken with him Leonce Pilate, but he wanted to return to his country, and waited for a ſhip to ſet ſail for Conſtantinople. Petrarch wiſhed to detain him ſomewhat longer, but he embarked ſoon after. Petrarch adds to the picture Boccace gave of him, that he was ſour, arrogant, and ſometimes crazy; and ſo filthy as to diſguſt every one, and very inconſiderate and rude in his expreſſions, of which he gives us an example. One day when they were together at a ſolemn feaſt, where they ſung high maſs according to the Roman ritual, with all the accuſtomed ceremonies: "I cannot ſupport, ſaid the Greek, the nonſenſe of theſe Latins." Petrarch was extremely offended and alarmed with his want of delicacy in this ſolemn ſituation. "If the people had heard theſe words, ſays he, they would have ſtoned the unfortunate Greek; though I wiſhed more inſtruction from him, I was not ſorry for his departure. I feared I might

catch

catch his ſour, melancholy humour; it is a diſeaſe of the ſoul as contagious as the diſorder of the body." Petrarch treated him, however, with great kindneſs, and as he perceived he read the comedies of Terence with pleaſure, he gave him a copy of them to amuſe him upon his voyage; though I cannot imagine, ſays he, how the moſt gloomy of the Greeks can reliſh the moſt lively of the Africans.

In the year 1363, a prieſt whom Petrarch had charged with a letter for Lelius, called on his return from Rome, and with a mournful ſilence put Petrarch's letter into his hand without ſpeaking a word. Petrarch perceiving his own characters and ſeal, cried out haſtily what does this mean? Why is this letter ſtill ſealed up? What is Lelius about? Where is he? The prieſt kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and made no reply. Petrarch too well comprehended his meaning, and gave himſelf up to grief. He 1363.

had

had lived thirty years in the greateſt friendſhip with Lelius. This loſs was followed almoſt immediately by that of Simonides, who died at Naples of the plague. The perſon who had cloſed his eyes brought the news to Petrarch. He ſought in the boſom of his friend Boccace a conſolation under theſe diſtreſſes, and beſeeches him to come to Venice. "You are dearer to me than ever, you are almoſt the only friend left me; I know not what is become of Barbatus, death ravages the country he inhabits; comply with my requeſt; you know my houſe, it is in a good air; Benintendi will paſs his evenings with us, and our Donat who has quitted the mountains of Tuſcany for the banks of the Adriatic. An abſolute ſolitude is contrary to humanity; but to a philoſopher and a man of letters two or three friends are ſufficient, becauſe at the worſt he can be ſatisfied with his own company. If you wiſh to vary your ſituation, we will go and

ſpend

ſpend ſome time at Trieſte, or Capo de Iſtria, where they tell me the air is good. Let us join together in reviewing the works of Simonides, and fitting them for poſterity; this is what I hoped from you and from him. "A few days after this he received the news that Barbatus was dead of the plague; the perſon from whom he received this account had paſſed his life with him, and beſought Petrarch to write his elogy: Petrarch replied to his letter as follows:

"I OUGHT to do what you deſire; Barbatus well deſerves it; the ſun never ſhone upon a kinder and more elevated ſoul. Letters were his food, and he fled from pomp and pleaſure; he was neither proud nor envious: he had great knowledge, and a memory to retain it; a lively genius, and a flowing ſtyle. He preferred me to all the world, but fate ſeparated us ever ſince the death of that incomparable Prince, who united us:

we have lived at a diſtance from each other, ſo that I am ignorant of his manner of life, what paſſed in his houſe, what he did for the republic? or his writings ſince that time. You who have paſſed your life with him, can do nothing more honourable for your country, or yourſelf, than to make his works known: never was there a better citizen. I do not except Ovid, whoſe manners were not anſwerable to his genius. Barbatus had more underſtanding than Ovid, and his manners were irreproachable. The letters I have written to him are a proof of the ſingular eſteem in which I held him."

THE place of apoſtolic ſecretary being ſtill vacant, Francis Bruni wrote to Petrarch, that he was known to the Pope, who had often ſhewn him favour, and that he begged he would write a letter of recommendation for him to his holineſs. Petrarch replied, that it would be impertinent

pertinent in a man like him to recommend one known and beloved by the Pope; he wrote however to Avignon, and it was, no doubt, owing to the character he gave of him, that this office was conferred upon Bruni. When Petrarch was informed of it, he gave him ſome admirable advice on his conduct in this important place; and ſpeaking of the Roman pontiff, he ſays:

"THERE is not a greater or more reſpectable character; his peer is not in the world; but he ought, in his very elevated ſtation, to be more humble and meek than he was before. He ought not to forget that he holds on earth the place of him who ſays, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.' Does it then ſuit the vicar of a humble lord, to be proud and arrogant in ſpirit?"

PETRARCH writing to Boccace, at this time ſpeaks of the Italian jugglers,

who were poets and muſicians joined; they went to the palaces of Princes, or the caſtles of great Lords, to ſing their praiſes: their ſongs were ſometimes ſatirical, on various ſubjects; and they accompanied them with the harp or ſome other inſtrument. "They are a ſet of people, ſays Petrarch, who have little genius, great memories, and ſtill greater impudence. Having nothing of their own, they cover themſelves with the ſpoils of others, and declaim with emphaſis the verſes they have learned by heart: they hereby conciliate the favour of the great, who give them money, cloaths, and ſometimes conſiderable preſents: They ſeek theſe means of living among authors, whoſe verſes they obtain by prayers and money, when the neceſſities of the author, or his covetouſneſs, will part with them on theſe conditions. I have often been troubled with their importunities; but, ſilenced by my refuſals, they come rarely to me at preſent:

ſent: now and then, touched by the miſery of the petitioner, I give him a production to procure him food. Some who have gone from me naked and pennyleſs, have returned ſome time after dreſſed in ſilk, their purſe well filled, to give me thanks for having relieved their diſtreſs. I aſked one of them, why he always came to me, why he did not go to others, to Boccace for inſtance; he replied, he had often, and without ſucceſs. As I was ſurpriſed that a man ſo prodigal of his wealth ſhould be ſo avaricious of his poetry, they told me he had burnt all his verſes in the vulgar tongue, becauſe they were inferior to mine. Tell me, is it from pride or modeſty you have done this? Did I even precede you, who ſhould be ſo happy to walk in the ſame line, would there not be too much preſumption in refuſing the ſecond or third place, and beholding with impatience the ſuperiority of two or three fellow-citizens?"

THE firſt rank in letters had been given to Dante, the ſecond to Petrarch, and the third to Boccace. Petrarch proceeds in his letter to comment upon the ignorance of his age:

"AGE obſcure and inglorious! ſays he. Thou deſpiſeſt antiquity, thy mother, the inventreſs of all the arts; thou dareſt to compare thyſelf to her, and even arrogate the preference. I ſpeak not of the people in general, whoſe opinion is always to be deſpiſed; or of the military, who think their art in its perfection when it is in the decline, and who go to combat dreſſed out as for a wedding, more occupied to pleaſe their miſtreſſes, than terrify their enemies; their ignorance is their excuſe: I paſs over in ſilence alſo thoſe kings who make royalty conſiſt in gold and purple, the ſceptre and the diadem, while they are governed by their own paſſions; proſperity blinds them, and how then ſhould they penetrate into antiquity?

tiquity? But what can men of letters alledge, who are guilty of the ſame error; who condemn Plato and Ariſtotle, make a mock of Socrates and Pythagoras, deſpiſe Cicero, that god of eloquence, think ſlightly of Varro and Seneca, and look upon the ſtyle of Livy and Salluſt to be rude and vulgar? I had a converſation one day with a philoſopher of this kind, who went beyond all I have ſaid, and had the horrid preſumption to blaſpheme againſt Jeſus Chriſt, and the doctrine of his goſpel. I was talking with him in my library, and I happened to quote ſome paſſages from the ſacred books: he replied, his brows bent with diſpleaſure, 'Keep to yourſelf your doctors of the church; I know very well who ought to be followed.' 'You ſpeak, ſaid I, with the authority of the apoſtle Paul; I wiſh you thought as he did.' 'Your St. Paul, he replied, is a fool, and a ſower of words.' It is true, ſaid I, that the ſeed he has ſown has had

great ſucceſs, cultivated by his ſucceſſors, and watered with the blood of the martyrs, it has produced an abundant harveſt.' With an air of compaſſion, and a contemptuous grin, he replied, 'Be a good Chriſtian as long as you pleaſe; for my part, I believe nothing about it; your Paul, your Auguſtine, and all the others you boaſt of, were only idle bablers: oh! if you could read Averroes, you would ſee how ſuperior he is to them all!' I own that this blaſphemy put me into ſuch a paſſion, it was with difficulty I could contain; Go, ſaid I to him, hold elſewhere ſuch diſcourſes as theſe; and taking him by the cloak, I put him out of my houſe with more roughneſs than ſuited my character. There are a multitude of ſuch people as theſe, whoſe inſolence and ignorance nothing can ſuppreſs, neither the reſpect due to Jeſus Chriſt, nor the fear of inquiſitors, priſons, or faggots, nothing can make any impreſſion upon them. Theſe are the

people,

people, my dear friend, with whom we live, and who take upon them the office of our judges; not content with having loſt the works of the antients, they inſult their manes; eager after novelties, they attach themſelves to new guides, ſpread abroad new doctrines, and deſpiſe all that are antient. We cannot hope for better judges in poſterity: licentiouſneſs increaſes every day, and the number of its philoſophers; the ſchools, market-places, and ſtreets, are full of them."

Soon after writing this letter, Petrarch went and paſſed the autumn at Pavia; Galeas Viſcomti had built there the fineſt palace in the world. At Eaſter he went always to Padua, to diſcharge at that holy time the office of his canonry. The Florentines, who aſked him to reſide in his own city, applied to the Pope to grant him a canonry there: the Pope had ſomething better in view for him; but the rumour of his death being

ſpread

ſpread over France, the Pope diſpoſed of that, and the benefices of Petrarch, many of which the latter, unknown to him, had given away to his friends; this cauſed a great diſturbance in the Roman court. This falſe report had ſpread to Italy, and they wept for him at Milan, and even at Padua, which is ſo near Venice, "that had I been dead, ſays he, they might have heard my laſt ſigh there." He had a ſort of complaint which was very troubleſome, and occaſioned ſo great an itching, that he was unable to write, or employ himſelf in his uſual affairs: this was the only ground of the report.

1365. In 1365, Boccace went to Avignon on ſome public affair: he wrote to Petrarch, giving an account of his friends whom he ſaw at Avignon, and particularly Philip de Cabaſſole, now made Patriarch of Jeruſalem. As ſoon as he ſaw Boccace, though he knew him not, he ran to embrace him in the preſence of the

the Pope and the Cardinals, aſking with impatience for news of his dear Petrarch.

Petrarch ſome months after this ſent his Treatiſe on Solitude to Philip de Cabaſſole, which he had long promiſed, but could not before get copied. This prelate wrote to Petrarch to thank him for his book; he aſſured him the Pope and the Cardinal Gui of Bologna were deſirous of it; that the Archbiſhop of Embrun, and the Biſhop of Liſbon, had read it with great pleaſure; "As to myſelf, adds he, I delight in it ſo much that I make them read it to me at my repaſts."

"You have the eyes of a lynx, replies Petrarch, but your friendſhip for me has blinded you; it is always equally ardent. You will cauſe me at length to eſteem my own works; for why ſhould I ſuppoſe that ſo many great men are deceived in their

their judgments? Truly you will inſpire me with confidence and emulation!"

DONAT, the friend of Petrarch at Venice, came one morning to inform him of the tragical death of Leonce Pilate. When he was got to Greece, he wrote Petrarch a letter as long and as dirty as his hair and his beard, in which he praiſed Italy to the ſkies, ſaid every ill thing he could deviſe of Greece, and curſed Byzantium; he concluded by deſiring from Petrarch a letter of recommendation to the Emperor of Conſtantinople, by whom he aſſured him he was as well thought of as by the Emperor of Rome. Petrarch made no anſwer to this letter. The Greek, who ſighed after Italy, and wanted to be recalled there by Petrarch, wrote ſeveral times to acknowledge his error in returning to Greece, and to deſire him to pardon it; but Petrarch, who knew his natural inconſtancy of humour, and believed him too old to alter, agreed with

Boccace to give him no anſwer. "This Greek, ſaid he, who would have been uſeful to our ſtudies, if he were not a ſavage beaſt, ſhall never be recalled by me. It is but juſt that a man who though in miſery trampled under foot the delights of Italy, ſhould drag out a miſerable life at Byzantium: let him go, if he will, with his filthy beard, his ragged cloak, and his brutiſh manners, and keep the labyrinth of Crete, where I know he paſſed ſeveral years.

Notwithstanding Petrarch's continued ſilence, Leonce embarked for Venice, in the firſt ſhip he could meet with; perſuaded that Petrarch and Boccace would behold him again with pleaſure, or at leaſt that they would not ſhut their doors againſt him. Having ſafely paſſed the Boſphorus, the Propontis, the Helleſpont, the Egean and Ionic ſeas, he was entered happily into the Adriatic, when there aroſe on a ſudden

ſudden a dreadful ſtorm: while every one was employed in the neceſſary buſineſs of the ſhip, the terrified Greek had bound himſelf to a maſt; when a flaſh of lightening ſetting fire to the cords of the ſails, he was conſumed in a moment. The people in the ſhip were ſeized with terror, but no one periſhed, except Leonce. The ſhapeleſs and half-roaſted body of this miſerable Greek was thrown into the ſea, and devoured by the fiſh of Italy, inſtead of the worms of Greece, to whom Petrarch had deſtined it. He was touched however with this event, and wr te to Boccace to impart it to him. "This unfortunate man, ſaid he, is gone out of this world as mournfully as he came into it. I believe he never experienced one ſerene day. His phyſiognomy ſeemed to announce his cataſtrophe; I cannot divine how any ſparks of poetic fire could ever penetrate into a ſoul enveloped with ſuch thick darkneſs. His cloaths and his books are not loſt; I

will

will have them ſought, for perhaps there may be an Euripides, and a Sophocles, and ſome other books he promiſed me." Petrarch was ever aſſiduous in his ſearch after the beſt Greek authors. He begged Boccace to ſend him the tranſlation of Homer made by Leonce. It was written out fair by the hand of Boccace, who had worked at it with the Greek. The manuſcript comprehended the whole Iliad, and a part of the Odyſſey. Leonce had not finiſhed the laſt. Petrarch had ſighed for this Latin Homer many years. "The Greek and Latin authors, ſays he, which were in my library, received him with tranſports of joy."

In February, 1366, there was great rejoicing in the houſe of Petrarch at Venice; Frances his daughter was brought to bed of a ſon, to whom Donat ſtood godfather, and to whom they gave the name of Francis. She had a daughter before this, born in 1363. 1366.

Every

EVERY letter Petrarch received from Avignon, above all from Philip de Cabaſſole, whoſe opinion weighed with him more than all the reſt, was filled with the praiſes of Urban. The church reſounded with his fame; nothing was talked of but his wit, his eloquence, his piety, his love of juſtice, his zeal for order, his bounty to the good, and his averſion to the wicked. He began his pontificate with the wiſeſt regulations. He ſent back the courtly prelates: and repreſſed the greedineſs of the Eccleſiaſtics; obliging moſt of them to be content with one benefice. He extended his care alſo to the reformation of luxury in the habits of the monks and clergy. The black monks had taken it into their heads to place upon their cowls, high crooked bonnets, which they called horns. He forbade them to wear theſe bonnets, and the officers of his palace had orders to take them off by force, if they appeared there in them. Petrarch highly

highly approved theſe regulations, and only wiſhed this great Pope would extend his reformation to the dreſs of all the world, but principally in Italy. Who can behold, ſays he, with patience, the ſhoes with pointed toes ſo long that they will reach the knee, head-dreſſes with wings to them, the hair put into a tail; the foreheads of the men furrowed with the heads of thoſe ivory needles, with which the women faſten their hair, and their ſtomachs ſqueezed in by machines of iron, &c.

One of the beſt reforms of Urban, was the ſuppreſſion of Aſylums. A man guilty of the greateſt crimes, had only to take refuge in the court of a Cardinal's palace, and he could not be purſued by juſtice. The Cardinal de Tailerand, who knew the characters of men, foreſaw this would be a great pontiff. For, a little time after his exaltation, he ſaid to ſome one who aſked him his opi-

nion of Urban; we have now indeed a Pope. Petrarch could not hear theſe things without ſhedding tears of joy, and was tempted to write to this great man. After ſome heſitation he was encouraged to do it. The chief of his letter is an ardent requeſt, that after ſo many excellent works he will put the finiſhing hand to all, by removing the Holy See to Rome; and he ſpeaks with the utmoſt freedom, and even preſumption, on the ſubjects he was led to examine by the hope of this great event.

THE anſwer of Urban was agreeable to the benevolence of his character. "I received your letter, ſays he, with pleaſure, and read it with attention: I find many things in it worthy of praiſe, for the beauty of the thoughts, and the elegance of the ſtyle. I admire your eloquence, your wiſdom, and your zeal for the public good. I ſhall be charmed to ſee you, and to have it in my power to give you ſome tokens of my favour."

URBAN,

URBAN, who was more verſed in the canon law, than in hiſtory and the belles lettres, deſired Francis Bruni to make ſome comment upon Petrarch's letter, that he might underſtand it with more eaſe. Every body at Avignon was aſtoniſhed with this requeſt. Soon after he received this letter, the Pope, whoſe inclination was in perfect accord with it, declared his reſolution to depart for Rome the Eaſter of the following year, and ordered the apoſtolical palace to be repaired, which had been long neglected, and that they ſhould prepare lodgings for him at Viterbo, where he would ſtop. The King of France, who found it advantageous to have the Pope in his neighbourhood, ſent Nicholas Oremè, who made a very flat oration in full conſiſtory. The Pope replied to it with gravity, and in few words, and ſhewed the impreſſion it had made, by haſtening the preparations for his departure.

In 1366, Petrarch went to paſs the hot months at Pavia. The court of Galeas Viſcomti was in the midſt of joy and feſtivity at the baptiſm of a daughter, whom Iſabella of France lay in of in May. Petrarch found Galeas himſelf in a pitiable ſtate with the gout, which tormented him more than ever: he had it in his feet, hands, and ſhoulders, the other parts of his body were without motion, and his nerves ſo ſhrunk that he could not hold himſelf upright. The pains he ſuffered were ſo terribly ſharp and ſevere, that his friends could not behold him without tears: his courage and patience aſtoniſhed all the world. It was indeed wonderful to behold a man of his rank, ſtill young, of a delicate conſtitution, brought up in ſoftneſs and pleaſure, deprived of all his limbs, and ſuffering ſuch agonies, without the leaſt complaint. He looked upon his diſtempered body with as tranquil and ſerene an air as if it had been the body of another man. He ſent

to Florence for Thomas de Garbo, the greateſt phyſician at this time in Italy; Thomas joined to a great knowledge in his profeſſion a very extenſive practice; he told Petrarch he had never ſeen ſo ſtrong and ſo healthy a conſtitution as his in his life.

The 20th of July, 1366, Petrarch awaking at midnight, as was his cuſtom, to ſay matins, recollected that juſt at that time he entered into his ſixty-third year, which is looked upon as the moſt critical period of human life. "I was born, ſays he to Boccace, at Arezzo in 1304, on Monday the 20th of July, at the break of day. Many princes, philoſophers, and ſaints, have died at this period: obſerve what happens to me, and judge from my fate."

At the end of October, 1366, Petrarch received a viſit from Stephen Colonna the younger, the only remaining branch of

that illuſtrious family. He came from France, and was going to Rome, to wait the arrival of the Pope. After many hours of converſation, not having met for ſuch a number of years, Stephen, in haſte to depart, aſked Petrarch if he ſhould carry no meſſage from him to the Pope. Petrarch replied, "After preſenting my humble duty to the holy Father, relate to him the following hiſtory, which is taken from Seneca. Alexander having acquired the name of great by his victories in Aſia, the Corinthians ſent ambaſſadors to him, to offer him the freedom of their city, a thing ridiculous in itſelf, but which they had never done to any but Hercules. This determined Alexander not to deſpiſe the preſent they made him. There are things mean in themſelves, which obtain value from their rarity. This example authoriſes me to offer my heart to the Pope; though I am only a worm of the earth before him, it may be acceptable perhaps, becauſe of all the

Popes

Popes of this age, to him alone have I offered it. If he aſks why ſuch wiſe, eloquent and generous men as have been among them, and whoſe kindneſs I have experienced, have never obtained this from me; you may anſwer, becauſe, according to my judgment, he is the only one of them who has done his duty."

The twenty-fifth of October this year, Nicholas Acciajoli, the great friend and patron of Petrarch, died at Naples. His biographer relates, that St. Bridget coming to that city, lodged with dame Jaquette, ſiſter of the grand Senechal, and that ſhe ſaid to her one day, "Your brother will die ſhortly." The ſiſter diſtreſſed at this prediction, went to ſeek her brother, and found him with the queen in good health, but he died a few days after of an abſceſs in his head. His body was carried, by his order, to that magnificent monaſtery of the Carthuſians he had built near Florence, and to which he

had ſent a great number of precious manuſcripts, intending to eſtabliſh a library, and finiſh his days in that delightful ſpot.

1367. In the beginning of the year 1367, Petrarch underwent a domeſtic chagrin, which (as it regarded a perſon of great conſequence to the republic of letters after the death of Petrarch, and moſt writers of that perſon's life have miſtaken many circumſtances in it) ſhall be inſerted here from Petrarch's letters; I ſpeak of John Malphigi, known of ſome by the name of John of Ravenna. His father, though he had neither birth nor fortune, ſent him when very young to ſtudy at Venice; he was ſo fortunate as to have Donat de Prato for his maſter, who conceived a particular friendſhip for him. Petrarch took him into his houſe in 1364. He deſcribes him thus to Boccace:

"* A year after you went from me, I took to live with me a young man of good

good character; he has a lively and penetrating genius, and an extraordinary memory. He learned my twelve Eclogues by heart in eleven days, and recited them without heſitation. Notwithſtanding this ſtrength of memory, he has fire and imagination, qualities rarely united. If he lives, I hope he will be ſomething great. He hates and flies from money, as much as others love and deſire it; it is to no purpoſe to offer it, he will hardly receive the neceſſaries of life. As to the love of retirement, faſtings, and watchings, he goes far beyond me. Shall I own it? By theſe diſpoſitions he has inſinuated himſelf into my heart to ſuch a degree, that I love him as if he was my own ſon, and even more; for my ſon would be maſter, according to the faſhion of the age; and this young man is all obedience, more occupied with pleaſing me than himſelf. He acts from feeling, and not from intereſt; he ſeems to deſire nothing but to improve by my aſſiſtance.

My

My familiar epiſtles were in the utmoſt diſorder; four of my friends had undertaken to arrange them, but were ſoon tired of the employment: he accompliſhed this taſk: there are three hundred and fifty, including this I am writing: you ſhall have them written by his hand, which is clear and diſtinct, and not like that of moſt writers. He has a talent for poetry, and if he cultivates it, he will ſucceed admirably. The timidity of his youth gives him an air of embarraſſment, and his expreſſion is not eaſy, but his ſentiments are ſublime and delicate. He loves to imitate at preſent, which is agreeable to his age; in time he will ceaſe to copy, and from the ſtyles of others form one of his own that ſhall excel them."

MALPHIGI ſeemed to be formed expreſsly for Petrarch: he took him with him every where in all his journeys and amuſements; and to attach him ſtill more,

he

he cauſed him to take upon him the eccleſiaſtical ſtate. The Biſhop of Ravenna, who conferred it on him, commanded him to love and honour Petrarch, never to leave him, and to look upon the happineſs of falling into his hands as a particular favour of Providence. Petrarch procured for him the certain reverſion of a benefice, which ſhould enable him to buy books, cloaths, and all he wanted, without recourſe to any one, and intended to do much more for him.

This young man, amiable as he was, and the delight of Petrarch, went into his ſtudy, and told him plainly, he could not ſtay any longer with him, and that he deſigned to go away immediately. Petrarch, aſtoniſhed beyond meaſure, dropped his pen, and looking attentively at him, and perceiving in his countenance the diſorder of his ſoul, he aſked him what all this meant, and whether he had any cauſe of complaint againſt him,

him, his friends, or his ſervants? John declared he had not; and added with tears, that he well knew he ſhould never be ſituated ſo happily and honourably as with him.

"IF this is the caſe, unhappy young man, ſaid Petrarch, if nothing is wanting, nothing diſpleaſes you with me, why would you leave me? Where do you propoſe to go?" John, with a voice interrupted by tears, replied, "I only leave you becauſe I can write no longer." "How then? do your hands tremble? does your eye-ſight fail you?" "Neither one nor the other; but I have taken ſuch a diſguſt to writing, that I cannot bring myſelf to take up the pen again." "I told you ſo, replied Petrarch; you wrote too much. It is exceſs that produces diſguſt. Leave off writing, repoſe yourſelf, and you will find that your taſte for it will return." "No, replied John, with a melancholy air, I ſhall

ſhall never more write for you or any one." "So much the better, do not write; I did not take you for my ſecretary, but my ſon. You ſhall read, you ſhall chat with me, you ſhall accompany me every where, and be the ornament of my little houſe."—"I inhabit a houſe where I do nothing? Eat bread I have not earned? I have too much heart for that. Your arguments are vain: let me go freely, or I ſhall depart without your permiſſion."

PETRARCH, hurt by this anſwer, replied to him with ſome ſharpneſs, "Wretched young man! And do you then think ſo poorly of yourſelf, that you cannot be uſeful to me unleſs you write? You have deceived me: I had conceived a better opinion of your underſtanding. But what will our friend Donat ſay, who gave us to each other?" "He may ſay what he will; what have I to do with Donat?" "Ungrateful as

you

you are, is it thus you reſpect your maſter, and the father of your ſoul? When he ſhall ſee you without me, he will aſk you where you have left your father; he will believe either that I am dead, or that your head is turned." Petrarch then recalled to his remembrance the exhortations of the Biſhop, and tried to convince him of his comfortable ſituation. "It is all in vain, ſaid John; nothing can move my reſolution." Saying this, he went out immediately, and directed his ſteps to the gate; but he could not get off, becauſe the city of Padua is ſurrounded with double walls and two rivers. He came back very melancholy: Petrarch begged he would acquaint him with the true cauſe of his departure, promiſing to let him go, and to give him money for his journey, and letters of recommendation. He ſtill proteſted that he had no other reaſon for leaving him than that he named. "For my own part, ſays Petrarch, I think he muſt have been

been tempted by ſome other proſpect, or that he is turned fool. His eyes wander, and are different from what they were. When he walks through the city, the people point at him, and ſay, 'Do you ſee that young man? 'Learning has turned his head.' I am juſt now informed, it is his deſign to go to Naples: who knows? perhaps from the cinders of Virgil of Mantua, may riſe up a new Virgil of Ravenna. He has been ſpoiled with praiſe: to give him emulation, we have fed him with pride. This will be a leſſon hereafter to praiſe none but perſons of approved virtue, and not to depend on perſons of his age."

Petrarch haſtened to put this young man again into the hands of Donat, hoping he might cure him of this folly. He appeared better at firſt, but it ſoon returned. There was nothing fixed or regular in his deſigns: ſometimes he would go to Naples, to ſee the tomb of Virgil; ſome-

ſometimes into Calabria to ſeek the bower of Ennius; in fine, to Conſtantinople and Greece to learn the Greek tongue. Petrarch in vain repreſented to him, that he did not perfectly underſtand Latin; that the voyage was full of peril; that he had no money, and that he would find nothing but ruins at Athens, and ignorance in Greece. When he was thus oppoſed, he bent his brows, talked in a confuſed manner, and changed his intention. Every moment his body appeared to be agitated by many contending ſouls. The concluſion of all was, he went away one day, ſaying, he would go and ſee the weſtern Babylon.

In croſſing the Apennine to go to Piſa, he ſuffered much from violent rains. When he found on his road any one who knew Petrarch, he told them he went to Avignon by his order. Several pitied him, and blamed Petrarch for ſending ſo young a man without experience or a companion

on

on ſo long a journey. When he came to Piſa he waited ſome time for a ſhip; there was none; he was tired of waiting, and repaſſed the Apennine amidſt a thouſand dangers. As he croſſed the Taro he was near being drowned, but a perſon who ſaw him ſinking, drew him out of the water by his feet almoſt dead with famine, fatigue, and miſery. When he came back to Pavia; he had the air of thoſe ſhadows that glided round Virgil on the banks of the Styx. Petrarch ſays on this occaſion, "I no longer confide in this young man; I expect every moment he will leave me again. He will find a little proviſion I have made him, and the door open. I ſhall not even attempt to retain him. I know what I ought to think; but you know me, and that there is nothing that I do not pardon and forget; no enemy, whoever he be, that I cannot love, if I find in him repentance and ſhame; this ſoftneſs of

nature may ſometimes be dangerous, but it will never make me bluſh."

JOHN, as Petrarch foreſaw, did not remain one year in peace; the rage of journeying came upon him again; he determined to go to Calabria, and Petrarch gave him a letter of recommendation for Hugues de St. Severin, whom he knew at Naples, and who held a diſtinguiſhed rank in that province.

"I RECOMMEND this young man to you, ſaid he; he has genius, and an excellent diſpoſition: ſeized with the madneſs of running about the world, he is determined upon travelling for improvement. I cannot blame him for this choice, though I am very ſorry for his departure." Petrarch gave him alſo a letter for Bruni the Apoſtolic Secretary, as he was to paſs through Rome, who took him to his houſe; on which Petrarch felicitates him; "You are now, ſays he,

after many tempeſts got into a fine port; if you cannot live with this amiable man, I know not with whom you can live. Learn to fix, and remember the proverb, 'the rolling ſtone gathers no moſs.' Learn to live with men; you will find ſome every where. You muſt live with them or with beaſts. You can neither ſuffer ſolitude nor the world; this is a great diſorder of the ſoul, which virtue alone can cure."

These anecdotes concerning Malphigi have been dwelt on, as he was one of the moſt learned men of this century, and contributed very much to the eſtabliſhment of letters. He went to teach at Padua after the death of Petrarch; he had there for his diſciple Sicco Polontin, who gives him the greateſt praiſe. "He was, ſays he, the wiſeſt, moſt eloquent, and the beſt maſter in Italy both for ſcience and morals." Collucio Salutati ſpeaks of him in the ſame manner. The

republic of Florence invited him to be a profeſſor in that city in 1397; he paſſed the reſt of his life there, and had for his diſciples the moſt learned men of the fifteenth century, the Aretins, Pogges, &c. What he did for the Latin tongue, Emanuel Chryſoloras did for the Greek in that city; and this is the true period of the revival of letters, to which it muſt be owned Petrarch greatly contributed, if we only conſider his forming the genius of Malphigi.

In 1367, Urban removed to Rome: moſt of the Cardinals were chagrined to leave the fine palaces they had built at Avignon. Five of them would not follow him, but remained at Avignon, The Pope went in a Venetian galley, and was eſcorted by a fleet which the queen of Naples, the Venetians, the Genoeſe, and Piſans had ſent to carry over the Roman court. When they had weighed anchor, the Cardinals who re-

mained at Avignon, raiſed horrid cries, and overwhelmed the Pope with injuries. Vile Pope, ſaid they, impious Father, whether are you leading your children? One would have ſuppoſed, ſays Petrarch, he was leading them to Memphis among the Saracens; the Pope deſpiſed theſe impotent aſſaults, and had a rapid courſe. He ſtopped ſome days at Genoa, and arrived in June at Viterbo, where he received the homage of all the Italian princes; and the ambaſſadors of Rome brought him the keys of the city, and of the caſtle of St. Angelo. There was a commotion among the people at Viterbo, cauſed by a quarrel of the inhabitants, with the ſervants of ſome of the Cardinals: but the ſedition was ſoon appeaſed, and the authors of it hung up.

Petrarch was delighted with this event, and wrote a long letter to the Pope, which chiefly tends to prove the ſuperiority of Italy to France: in it is the

following remark on the French. "As to what regards the ſocial character; I own that the French have a gay and chearful temper, and are eaſy in their manners and converſation; they play generouſly, they ſing agreeably, they entertain freely, they are in ſhort amiable hoſts; but we muſt not ſeek among them for ſolid manners, or true morality."

ANOTHER of his remarks on the preceding Popes is ſingular. "I riſe always at midnight to ſing the praiſes of God; the ſilence of the night is beſt ſuited to this employment. It is the part of my life when I am moſt myſelf, and moſt delightfully employed. It is a cuſtom I have obſerved, which has never been interrupted but by ſickneſs, and which I ſhall ever adhere to. In the office for lent there is a prayer for the Pope, which is to be repeated three times: I declare to you, that formerly when I came to that part I could ſcarcely forbear ſmiling, though

though I had more reaſon to weep and groan. What, ſaid I, ſhall I pray more frequently for a man who keeps the church in exile, and who leaves the chair of St. Peter empty, than for my relations and benefactors? However I continued to pray, but it was not heartily. What a difference do I feel at preſent, ſince the friend of God has rejoiced the triumphing church by his return! When I pronounce his name, I bow three times profoundly. I ſay thoſe three prayers with a louder and more diſtinct voice; and I ſeem even to wiſh for them before they come."

GALEAS Viſcomti ſent for Petrarch in 1368, to deſire him to negociate a peace with the Pope, who was in great diſpleaſure at the conduct of Barnabas, and in alliance with many of the great lords he determined to exterminate the Viſcomti's. He alſo ſent for him to be preſent at the marriage of his daughter 1368,

Violante, which was ſoon to be celebrated at Milan. This lord choſe Lionel, duke of Clarence, ſecond ſon to Edward king of England, for her huſband. Her dowry was two hundred thouſand florins, and ſeveral places in Piedmont.

THIS young Prince croſſed France, followed by all the Engliſh nobility, who were eager to attend a marriage where the charms of Italy, and the magnificence of the Viſcomti's, led them to expect ſo many pleaſures. The Duke was well received at Paris; the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy walked before him, and he was lodged in the Louvre. His ſtay in that city was one continued ſcene of joy and feaſting. The King loaded him with preſents: he paſſed from thence to Chamberri, where the count Amedie, uncle to Violante, treated him kindly, and conducted him to Milan. He made his entry there in May, at the Pavian gate. Galeas went out to meet him with a ſuperb

perb train. Blanche of Savoy his wife, Iſabella of France, wife to the Count of Vertus, his ſon, appeared at the head of fourſcore choſen ladies, all dreſſed with the greateſt magnificence in the ſame kind of habit. After them came John Galeas, Count of Vertus, followed, by thirty cavaliers, and thirty equerries in a uniform, mounted upon fine palfreys for the tournaments. The marriage was celebrated in the portico of the temple of St. Mary Majeur, in the ſight of a vaſt multitude, Galeas gave a ſplendid feaſt in the court of his palace. Petrarch was ſeated at the firſt table, where, except himſelf, there was none but princes and lords of the firſt rank: this was a mark of diſtinction, which at once ſerved to ſhew the friendſhip of Galeas, and that he knew what was due to genius, knowledge, and ſo great a character as Petrarch ſupported through the world.

JOHN

JOHN FROISSARD, known by his hiſtory and poems, came to Milan in the train of the Duke of Clarence. He had been in England, and had paid his court there to Philippa of Hainault, wife of king Edward the IIId. He was at this time about thirty, and ſeized this favourable opportunity of viſiting Italy. It does not appear that he was known to Petrarch: he was not then arrived at that fame he afterwards procured; ſo that having no rank in the republic of letters, and being hid as it were in the buſtle of this agitated court, it is not wonderful that Petrarch ſhould have no knowledge of him; but it ſeems ſurpriſing he ſhould not ſeek a union with Petrarch, who paſſed for the greateſt genius of his age, ſo deſirous as he was of ſeeing and knowing all great characters: but he tells us himſelf, he was at that time abſorbed in pleaſure and in love.

IN the midſt of theſe rejoicings, Petrarch

trarch was informed of an event which grieved him extremely, the death of his little grandſon. "This child, ſays he, reſembled me in ſo ſtriking a manner, that he might have been taken for my own: this rendered him dearer to his parents, and to Galeas de Viſcomti my lord, who bore the death of his own child with calmneſs, but ſhed many tears for the loſs of mine. For my own part, I could have wept abundantly, but I ſuppreſſed a grief that did not become my age. I had erected to his memory at Pavia, a little mauſoleum of marble, on which I had engraved in golden characters twelve elegiac verſes; in theſe were mentioned his age, two years and four months, and the tender ſorrow of his parents."

At this time Petrarch had the following letter from Boccace:

"My dear maſter! I ſet out from Certaldo

Certaldo to come to you at Venice; but continual rains, and the badneſs of the roads, prevented my purſuing my journey while you were there: but as ſoon as the weather cleared up, I was deſirous of ſeeing two perſons dear to you, your Tullia and her huſband, the only friends of yours I was not acquainted with. I met by accident upon the road, Francis de Broſſano, your ſon-in-law; he has doubtleſs told you how it rejoiced me: After the general compliments, and ſome queſtions concerning you, my attention was fixed upon his fine figure, his tranquil countenance, and the ſweetneſs of his manners and converſation. I admired your choice. But how ſhould I not admire every thing you do?"

"WHEN I came to Venice, I did not accept the offer of your houſe. I will tell you the truth; I would not lodge with Tullia in the abſence of her huſband. I doubt not you will do juſtice to my manner

ner of thinking in this as in other reſpects: but others do not know me as well as you do. My age, my grey hairs, my fat, which render me of no conſequence, ought to ſilence even ſuſpicion. But I know the world: they often ſee evil where there is none, and find traces of its footſteps where it has never been: on the minuteſt trifle you know a falſe rumour is often raiſed, which has as much effect as truth itſelf."

"After I had recovered my fatigue, I went to ſee your Tullia: when ſhe heard me named, ſhe came with eagerneſs toward me, and with a modeſt bluſh, and her eyes caſt upon the ground, paid me the politeſt reverence; after which, ſhe embraced me with filial tenderneſs: I felt immediately that ſhe was only fulfilling your wiſhes, and felicitated myſelf in being ſo dear to you. After the converſation that is produced on a firſt acquaintance, we went and ſeated ourſelves.

ſelves in your garden with ſome friends who were with us. She then offered me your houſe, your books, and all that belonged to you; which ſhe preſſed me to accept of, with as much eagerneſs as the delicacy of her character would permit. While ſhe was making theſe offers, your beloved little girl walked into the garden with a ſtep of dignity far beyond her age: ſhe looked at me with a ſweet ſmiling face, though ſhe knew me not. I took her into my arms, quite overwhelmed with joy: I thought I ſaw my own grand-daughter whom I have loſt, only ſhe was ſomething older and taller, and had cheſnut inſtead of flaxen hair. Alas! how many involuntary tears, which I hid as much as poſſible, did the words, geſtures, little queſtions, and gay appearance of your dear child coſt me on the reflection!"

"I SHOULD never end, was I to tell you how many inſtances of friendſhip

your

your ſon-in-law ſhewed me on his return; the viſits he made me when he could not prevail upon me to reſide with him, the repaſts he gave with a politeneſs and liberality like yourſelf. I will only mention one inſtance of his kindneſs. He knew that I was poor, I have never diſguiſed it; when he found me juſt ready to leave Venice, which was late in the evening, he drew me aſide, and finding he could not make me accept the marks of liberality he offered, he ſtretched out his gigantic arm to ſlip money into my hand, and bidding me adieu, ran away, leaving me confuſed at his generoſity, and diſtreſſed by the obliging violence with which he enforced it. Heaven grant I may be able to make him ſome return!"

Boccace concludes this letter, written in the eaſy and familiar manner of his Decameron, with a thouſand expreſſions of

of friendſhip and veneration for his maſter.

THE war in Italy was at this time carried on with warmth on all ſides. Petrarch could not therefore return to Venice by land, but he engaged the maſter of a veſſel for a great ſum, to embark with him on the Po. All the great lords were his friends, ſo that he had nothing to apprehend from their ſoldiers. The Banditti, who infeſted the highways, were his only terror. His friends, however, dreaded his embarkation, and his ſervants and the rowers trembled at every veſſel they beheld approach them. Petrarch alone felt no uneaſineſs, and in reality he received the greateſt civilities from all he met with. Every one ſaid, none but Petrarch could have paſſed without accident in ſuch a conjuncture; every other veſſel would have been pillaged, but they loaded his with game, fruits, and all kinds of proviſions, and

ſtopped

ſtopped him on his rout only to ſhew him every mark of reſpect. His modeſty made him attribute the ſucceſs of his navigation to the inſignificance of his condition, and to his known love of peace, "which is, ſays he, ſtamped upon my face." When he came to Padua, Francis de Corrare went out to meet him, but the rain, and the approach of evening, obliging him to return, he left ſome of his people with orders to accompany Petrarch to his houſe, where he ſent him proviſions for his ſupper, and after ſupper went to him, and ſpent the greateſt part of the night in converſation with him.

When Petrarch returned home, he was informed by ſome letters from Rome, particularly one from Francis Bruni, that the Pope deſired very much to ſee him there. Petrarch replied, he hoped ſoon to have that ſatisfaction; but the ſeaſon, and a diſorder in his leg, which he had hurt, prevented it at preſent. Bruni in

his letter informed him, he had adopted and joined Collucio Salutati in his office of Apoſtolic Secretary with himſelf, and that Collucio earneſtly deſired to be acquainted with Petrarch. He had devoted himſelf to eloquence, letters, and poetry, and ſtudied ſacred and profane hiſtory under the moſt learned men of his age; he loved men of letters, and attached himſelf in a ſingular manner to Petrarch during the remainder of his life, and expreſſed every ſentiment of zeal and affection for his memory after his death; and though they never met, Petrarch cheriſhed his affection with paternal love and attention. His anſwer to the firſt letter of Salutati, is as follows:

"OLD age, which renders others talkative, impoſes ſilence upon me. In my youth I wrote many, and very long letters: at preſent I write very ſhort ones; and theſe only to particular friends. With reſpect to you, whom I have never

ſeen;

ſeen; whom I know a little, but love very much; I ſhall write only a line, in anſwer to your amiable letter."

"Your ſtyle pleaſes me; and I am flattered by your kind opinion. I know I am unworthy of your praiſes, and the homage you pay me: but it turns to your glory; for how highly muſt you love virtue, who run after its very ſhadow! If deceived by fame, you treat me with ſuch generoſity, who can boaſt only an empty name; what would you not do for the man in whom you ſhould behold a real and ſolid virtue!"

In the letter of Salutati not inſerted, there is a great eulogy on the Pope, and an account of many noble actions done by him ſince he came to Rome. In October 1368, the Emperor came to the caſtle of St. Angelo, and waited there for the Pope; as ſoon as he ſaw him he diſmounted from his own horſe, and taking

the reins of that the Pope was upon, led the holy father to the church of St. Peter. Salutati ſpeaks of this condeſcenſion of the Emperor, in the following lines to Boccace:

"THE Roman prelates who followed the Pope, were charmed with the honour done him by the Emperor. The people ran in crowds, tranſported to ſee this union of the two greateſt monarchs upon earth. The lovers of peace could hardly ſatisfy themſelves with a ſight which excited ſuch pious emotions: but thoſe who interpret every thing wrong, attributed to the puſillanimity of the Emperor, and a feigned humility, his ſubmiſſion to the Pope. The enemies of the church either turned this affair into ridicule, or openly condemned it. For my own part, I was intoxicated with joy to behold what our fathers had never ſeen, and which we dared not even to hope; the pontificate in union with the em-

pire, the fleſh obedient to the ſpirit, and the monarchy of the world ſubmiſſive to the monarchy of heaven!"

The Emperor performed alſo the office of deacon at the maſs, where, Elizabeth his fourth wife was crowned, the day of All Saints. He made a ſhameful peace with the Viſcomti's, and in every action expreſſed the covetous mind for which he was famed; after which he went out of Italy weighed down with gold, leaving in exchange for it, a great number of parchments, and the ſublime and imperial dignity proſtituted. His conduct was ſuch, that Petrarch renewed not his connection with him on this viſit to Italy. The Pope's entering Rome, followed by two thouſand ſoldiers, was alſo diſapproved by Petrarch; and though he thought highly of his conduct on the whole, he ſpeaks with his uſual freedom of this action.

"IT does not, ſays he, become the Roman Pontiff to enter into Rome at the head of an army: his dignity, his ſanctity, is a ſtronger defence than ſwords and ſtaves. The arms of prieſts are prayers, tears, faſts, virtue, and ſobriety of manners: the croſs of Jeſus Chriſt is the only ſtandard they ſhould ſet up; it is dreaded by devils, and reverenced by men: and inſtead of drums and trumpets, they ſhould make the air reſound with the ſong of Hallelujah!"

THE Pope at this time conferred the hat on Philip de Cabaſſole, the friend of Petrarch. "Urban, ſays he, is the only one who knew his merit; I rejoiced at firſt, but afterwards I pitied my friend, and ſaid, what has he done to the Pope, that he ſhould bind him with a chain of gold, when he has moſt need of liberty and repoſe." The Pope was fond of Philip; he had left him governor of Avignon, and ordered him to ſee the walls of

that

that city completed, and that if any Cardinals oppoſed, he ſhould order their houſes to be pulled down.

In the month of May 1369, the Cardinal de Cabaſſole went to Monteſiaſcone to the Pope, who was gone there to paſs the ſummer. In a converſation they had together, much was ſaid about Petrarch: Urban expreſſed a great deſire to ſee him, and begged the Cardinal to join his endeavours to bring him to Rome. The Cardinal wrote him a very preſſing letter, which Petrarch was thus obliged to anſwer: 1369.

"Your letter found me in a languiſhing ſtate; I have had my fever forty days, and it has weakened me to that degree, that I am obliged to be carried to my church, though it joins my houſe. I feel that I ſhall never be well again: I am quite worn out. The Holy Father does me more honour than I merit. I

owe it all to you. Return him a thouſand thanks in your name and in mine."

THE Pope thinking this was an excuſe, wrote himſelf to Petrarch. "It is long, ſays he, I have deſired to ſee a perſon endowed with all the virtues, ornamented with all the ſciences; you cannot be ignorant of this, and yet you do not come. You make your health your apology; come as ſoon as you can without danger or inconvenience. You will find me always eager to behold you, and to procure you that repoſe of ſoul after which you have long ſighed."

"HOLY Father, replied Petrarch, is it poſſible I ſhould not ardently deſire to behold the man, whom God has raiſed to the church, to draw it out of the infamous dungeon it was fixed in? I ſhould not think myſelf a chriſtian, if I did not love (but what do I ſay) if I did not adore, the Pontiff who has rendered ſo great

a ſer-

a ſervice to the church and to myſelf. If the Po joined the ſea of Tuſcany, as it does the Adriatic, I would embark immediately; the calm motion of its waters would agree with my weakneſs, and you would ſee me ſail into your port, ſeated in the midſt of my books. The phyſicians ſay the ſpring will re-eſtabliſh my health; in this hope I am ſeeking out horſes for my journey. I know that Cato the cenſor had but one horſe and three ſervants; but our depraved manners will not allow that ſimple train: we cannot take a ſtep now without being ſurrounded with horſes and grooms: I reſiſt, as much as poſſible, the torrent of ſo perverſe a cuſtom; two horſes ſuffice me when I am at home; but on a journey, I am obliged to have many more for uſe, and to avoid murmurs. I am more known than I would be, and muſt ſometimes bend a little to the cuſtoms of a luxurious age. I ſhall avail myſelf of the firſt gleam of health to obey your orders;

orders: but I am perſuaded when you ſhall ſee at your feet a weak old man, uſeleſs to all but himſelf, and who only ſighs after leiſure and repoſe, you will quickly ſend him back again to his humble dwelling. My friends write me word you wiſh to ſerve me; I doubt not your good will. You have promiſed to procure me repoſe of ſoul; I can receive nothing from you I ſhould eſteem ſo great a treaſure: I ſhould prefer it to the wealth of Crœſus."

"RICHES take peace from the ſoul; but rarely, if ever, beſtow it. I would not ſet a foot out of my houſe to gain an empire: I neither deſire nor wiſh for any thing beyond what I have. Love, duty, piety, and gratitude, theſe are the only ſprings which can put me in motion. I aſk your benediction and favour; and if to that you can add repoſe, you will fill up the wiſhes of a poor old man."

PETRARCH

PETRARCH paſſed all the winter in preparing for this voyage; and made his will, in which were the following diſpoſitions:

HE forbids any one to weep for his death; "becauſe, ſays he, tears benefit not the dead, and they may injure the living." He aſks their prayers only, and that alms ſhould be given to the poor to pray for him. "As to what regards my burial, adds he, let them do as they will; it is of little conſequence to me where they place my body." He makes after this ſome pious legacies in favour of the religious orders, according to the cuſtom of that age; and he founds an anniverſary in the church of Padua, which is celebrated every year to this day on the 9th of July.

HE bequeaths to the lord of Padua his picture of the Virgin, painted by Giotto, "which ignorant people, ſays he,

he, diſcern not the beauty of; but which maſters in the art cannot behold without admiration."

To Donat, the grammar-maſter at Venice, he gives all the money he had lent him.

He bequeaths the horſes he may have at his death to two of the citizens of Padua he was acquainted with, and that they ſhould draw lots for them. To one of them, called Lombard de Serico, he owns the debt of one hundred and thirty-four gold ducats, advanced for the expence of his houſe, which he charged himſelf with on a particular occaſion, to the neglect of his own affairs. He bequeaths to him a goblet of ſilver gilt, which he made uſe of to drink water in, "more agreeable to me, ſays he, than wine." He bequeaths to John Abocheta, warden of his church, his great breviary that he gave a hundred francs for at Venice, on condition that after his death this breviary

viary ſhould remain in the ſacriſty, for the uſe of the prieſts belonging to that church.

To John Boccace five hundred florins of the gold of Florence, to buy him a winter habit for his evening ſtudies. "I am aſhamed, ſays he, to leave ſo ſmall a ſum to ſo great a man; and he begs all his friends to impute to his fortune alone the inſignificance of his gifts. To Thomas Barboſi, of Ferrara, he makes a preſent of his good lute, for him to make uſe of in ſinging the praiſes of God. To John Dondi, phyſician of Padua, he gives fifty gold ducats for a gold ring to wear in remembrance of him.

He appoints Francis de Broſſano, citizen of Milan, his heir, and deſires him, not only as his heir, but likewiſe as his very dear ſon, to divide in two parts, the money he ſhould find, one for himſelf, and the other for the perſon he had aſſigned him.

him. It ſhould ſeem by this, he would not mention his daughter by name in a public will, as ſhe was not born in marriage. This daughter died in child-bed ſixteen years after this, in the year 1384.

WITH reſpect to his little eſtate at Vaucluſe, he gives it to the hoſpital in that dioceſe.

IF Francis de Broſſano ſhould happen to die before him, in his place he makes Lombard de Serico his heir, who knows his ſentiments; and as he has always found him faithful during his life, he hopes he ſhall find him ſo after his death. This appears likewiſe to be a codicil in favour of his daughter.

HIS laſt bequeſt is to his brother Gerard, a Carthuſian of Montrieu: he deſires his heir to write to him immediately after his deceaſe, to give him the option of a hundred

hundred florins of gold, payable at once, or by five or ten florins every year.

A few days after he had made his will, 1370.
Petrarch ſet out on his rout. The pleaſure with which he undertook this journey to Rome, made him believe he was in a condition to ſupport it; but he ſoon found he had preſumed too much upon his ſtrength. When he got to Ferrara he fell down in a fit, in which he continued thirty hours without ſenſe or motion, and it was ſuppoſed he was dead; however they tried the moſt violent remedies, in hopes theſe might recal his ſenſes, "but I felt them no more (ſays he, ſpeaking of this afterwards) than a ſtatue of Polycetes or Phidias."

Nicholas the IId, of Eſt, ſon of Obizzon, was then lord of Ferrara, and the friend and admirer of Petrarch; he was extremely touched with his ſituation, had him brought to his houſe, and took

the greateſt care of him. The phyſicians as well as others thought he was dead, and the whole city was in grief. The news ſpread to Padua, Venice, Milan, and Pavia: crowds came from all parts of Italy to his burial. Hugues de Eſt, the brother of Nicholas, a young man of great merit, who had a ſingular taſte for the converſation of Petrarch, ſhewed him the moſt tender attention and care during his whole illneſs; he went to ſee him ſeveral times in the day, ſent every moment to inquire after him, and had every thing carried to him he thought might contribute to the re-eſtabliſhment of his health. Petrarch acknowledged he owed his ſurpriſing recovery, from death itſelf, as it were, to the bounty and affection of theſe two Lords; and expreſſed the moſt lively gratitude for their friendſhip. Hugues de Eſt was fond of tournaments to diſtraction.

THESE tournaments were tiltings, or combats

combats with lances; Equeſtrian games, which preſented an image of war, and helped to form warriors, and keep up among them military ardor. There were ſome traces of them in France in the ninth and tenth centuries, mentioned in the chronicle of Taus, and ſtrangers called them the combats of the French.

These warlike exerciſes paſſed from France, to Germany and England; and the authors of the Byzantian hiſtory agree that the people of the Eaſt learned theſe games from the French. Whatever precautions were however uſed in theſe games, and though edged and pointed weapons were forbidden; they were always dangerous, and ſometimes they proved mortal; which induced ſeveral Popes, and ſome councils, to prohibit them: and this was probably the reaſon why they were eſtabliſhed in Italy later than elſewhere, from the reſpect paid to the eccleſiaſtical authority. A

Milaneſe hiſtorian ſays, that Barnabas Viſcomti was the firſt who ordered in that city, in the year 1350, tiltings on high ſaddles, and tournaments according to the cuſtom of France and Germany. After which, they ſoon became the faſhion in all the courts of Italy. Hugues d'Eſt was the lord in this country who diſtinguiſhed himſelf the moſt in them, and acquired the higheſt glory. As his life had been often endangered by this practice, his relations deſired Petrarch to try if he could not moderate this paſſion for glory, which he indulged beyond bounds. Petrarch wrote this young lord the following epiſtle:

"I LEARN with pleaſure that you march rapidly on in the path of glory. It is difficult, and it is ſhort. Far from ſtopping, I would aſſiſt, I would accelerate you in ſo noble a career. Go: let nothing detain you: confront, if neceſſary, perils and death: fight for your honour,

nour, for your country, for your ſafety! It is for theſe you ought to diſplay your valour, and ſacrifice your life; but it is a madneſs to expoſe it in ſuch uſeleſs and dangerous games as the Equeſtrian; there is more raſhneſs in this, than true courage. Renounce theſe phantoms of war, I conjure you. My age, rather than my judgment, authoriſes me to ſpeak to you in this manner: you will pardon my temerity, in conſideration of my zeal. You have ſhewn ſufficiently of what you are capable in theſe exerciſes; it is time to ſtop: and it would be folly to purſue a courſe, where the peril you run is greater than the glory you can acquire. Leave theſe games to thoſe men, who can do nothing more, who know nothing better, and whoſe life or whoſe death are of no conſequence. Your welfare is precious to your brothers and your friends, and dear to the republic. A ſoul like your's ought to be occupied with more noble objects. We no-where

read that Cæſar or Scipio amuſed themſelves with any games of this kind."

HUGUES d'Eſt died ſoon after receiving this letter, in Auguſt 1370. Tournaments, though ſo deſtructive to the nobility in France, were not put a ſtop to till Henry the IId was killed in one of them.

WHEN Petrarch was thus recovered by the hoſpitality and affectionate care of the lords of Ferrara, he would have purſued his rout, but the phyſicians aſſured him he could not get to Rome alive. Their threats would not however have prevented his attempting it, if his ſtrength had ſeconded his deſires; but he was unable to ſit his horſe. They brought him back to Padua, laid down on a ſoft ſeat in a boat: his unhoped-for return cauſed as much ſurpriſe as joy in that city, where he was received by his lord and the citizens, as a man come back

again

again from the other world. To re-eſtabliſh his health, he went into the country, to a place called Arqua, a large village ſituated on the edge of a hill, which ſhelters it from the North, famous for its beautiful vines, and the excellent wines they produce. An everlaſting ſpring reigns here, and there are little villas ſcattered in a moſt agreeable manner over this delightful place. Petrarch built him a houſe at the top of the village, and he added to the vines of the country a great number of fruit-trees.

PETRARCH had quitted Venice for Padua, diſguſted with that licentiouſneſs of converſation which reigned univerſally there; and the philoſophy of Ariſtotle, ſo disfigured by former commentators, and not much enlighted by Averroes, whoſe diſciples at Venice believed the world co-eternal with God, and made a joke of Moſes and his book of Geneſis: "Would the Architect of the world,

ſay they, remain ſo long doing nothing? Certainly no. Its youthful appearance is owing to its revolutions, and the changes it has undegone by its deluges and conflagrations." They had a great contempt for Chriſt and his Apoſtles, whom they treated as idiots; the greateſt fathers of the church, as enthuſiaſts; as well as all thoſe who did not bow the knee to Ariſtotle and Averroes. They called the doctrines of Chriſtianity fables, and hell and heaven the tales of an aſs; and finally, they believed that Providence took no care of any thing under the region of the moon. Four young Venetians of this ſect had attached themſelves to Petrarch, who loved them, but oppoſed their opinions: this liberty aſtoniſhed them; and in conſequence of it, Petrarch was examined in a ſort of juridical manner, and pronounced by theſe judges to be a good man without letters: upon which occaſion Petrarch wrote a Treatiſe, entitled, His Own Ignorance, and that of many Others;

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in which he ſays, "I care little for what they deny me, if I really poſſeſs the good part they allow me to claim."

Averroes was a Spaniard by birth, who lived in the twelfth century; he was a judge, a phyſician, a philoſopher, and theologiſt: he knew neither Greek nor Latin hiſtory, nor antient philoſophy; he took the ſentiments of Ariſtotle from an Arabian tranſlation; and men of learning agree that the Arabian language is very ill calculated to expreſs the turns of the Greek, and the philoſophical ideas in this work.

Petrarch had himſelf formed the deſign of confuting the doctrines of this book; but he engaged father Lewis Marſili, an Auguſtine monk of Florence, to undertake it; he was a man of great natural genius, to which was joined indefatigable ſtudy. "When your leiſure will permit, I conjure you, ſays he, to

write againſt Averroes, that enraged animal, who barks with ſo much fury againſt Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles. I have neither time nor knowledge equal to ſuch a work; you have both: employ all your powers in it; Chriſt himſelf will aſſiſt the champion of his cauſe; it is impious for thoſe to be ſilent, who are ſo able to face this enemy of true religion."

THERE was great reaſon for this pious zeal of Petrarch: theſe unfriendly doctrines to the peace and ſalvation of men ſpread faſt; inſomuch that Leo the Xth, two centuries after this, publiſhed a bull in which he forbade any, under grievous penalties, to write or teach that the ſoul was mortal.

PETRARCH languiſhed all the ſummer; John de Dondi his phyſician, or rather his friend (for he would have no phyſician) wrote to him that he had diſcovered the true cauſe of his diſeaſe, and that it aroſe from

from eating fruit, drinking water, and from his frequent faſtings: he beſought him to alter his diet if he wiſhed to live, and to abſtain from all ſalted things, and raw fruits or herbs. "If you will not believe the phyſicians, ſays he, believe experience, and reflect how much you have ſuffered this year for not following their advice." Petrarch eaſily renounced ſalted proviſion; "but as to fruit, ſays he, which all the phyſicians look upon as they do hemlock and aconite, nature muſt have been a very unnatural mother, to give us ſuch agreeable food, of ſuch delightful hue and fragrance, only to ſeduce her children, by preſenting them with poiſon covered over with honey."

JOHN de Dondi, who has been often mentioned as the friend of Petrarch, "had a genius, ſays the latter, that would have raiſed him to heaven, if phyſic had not tied him to the earth." He was the greateſt phyſician in all Italy, attached

attached to Galeas Viſcomti, who gave him yearly two thouſand florins. He was alſo a ſkilful aſtronomer; and the inventor of the famous clock placed on the tower of the palace at Padua, which was conſidered as the wonder of the age; beſides the hours, it ſhewed the annual courſe of the ſun according to the twelve ſigns of the zodiac, the motion of the planets, the phaſes of the moon, the months, and even the holidays of the year. Philip de Maiziere ſays, "It was a ſphere all of braſs; and that notwithſtanding the number of wheels, which could not be reckoned without pulling the inſtrument to pieces, the whole of its motion was governed by one ſingle weight." John wrote a treatiſe on the baths of Padua, and the cauſe of the heat of the waters at Albano; and he mentions in it that his father made ſalt without ſun and without fire, by a ſort of evaporation with Balneum Maris: he alſo wrote a treatiſe on the manner of living

in the time of the plague. He loved the converſation and the works of Petrarch, and often went to ſee him: they had continual diſputes about phyſic, and each remained at the end of them in his own opinion. Petrarch permitted him to viſit him as a friend, but not as a phyſician: "When a phyſician comes in, ſays he, I know what he will ſay; "Eat young chicken, and drink warm water."

WHILE Petrarch was thus ſtruggling with his diſorder and his phyſician, he learned a piece of news not very likely to forward his cure. The Pope took it into his head on a ſudden to return to Avignon; that city, in concert with the Queen of Naples, and the Kings of France and Arragon, had ſent him veſſels to convey him thither. Urban gave this reaſon for his conduct; the neceſſity of making peace between the Kings of France and England: but no one doubted that the love of his country, the difficulty

culty of inuring himſelf to the climate of Rome, the uneaſy and rebellious character of the Italians, and the importunate ſolicitation of the Cardinals, were the cauſes of it. He was received at Avignon with the greateſt demonſtations of joy. St. Bridget told him, "If you go to Avignon, you will die ſoon after; the holy Virgin has revealed this to me." This pretended revelation happened to be accompliſhed: not long after his arrival there, he was ſeized with a mortal diſeaſe, and died in public the 19th of December, 1370, having ordered the doors of his houſe to be ſet open, that all the world might be more impreſſed by witneſſing his death. "It muſt have been a very touching and edifying ſight, ſays, a writer of that time, to behold a Pope extended like a poor man on a ſorry bed, with the habit of St. Bennet, which he always wore, his crucifix in his hand, ſhewing ſuch marks of piety, penance, and perfect reſignation." In the courſe

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of his pontificate, he received two ſingular honours, which might have diſcompoſed the moſt philoſophic head; and yet he was always the moſt humble and modeſt of men. The Emperor of the Weſt performed the office of his equerry; and the Emperor of the Eaſt abjured ſchiſm, and acknowledged him as Primate of the church.

PETRARCH was extremely grieved when he was informed of the return of this Pope to Avignon, and was preparing to write to him on the ſubject, when he was informed of his death. He made this ſhort prayer on the occaſion: "Lord, have mercy on this good Pope, and pardon his weakneſs: paſs over the faults of his youth, and this fault he has committed in his old age; ſince, conſidering the corruption of the times, he may be juſtly called a good man." Petrarch ſpeaks afterwards of his wiſdom and ſanctity, and that he erred through an exceſs

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of kindneſs to thoſe around him; and he adds, that he was famous for the miracles he performed.

When this news came to Bologna, to Cardinal Anglic his brother, who was legate there, it ſpread over that city a general grief. They reſolved to celebrate a ſolemn ſervice with a magnificence beyond example, for a Pope who had beſtowed ſuch ſervices on their city: all the princes and neighbouring lords were invited to it, and the embaſſadors of the principal cities; they reckoned up eight hundred noble perſons, all dreſt in black: the ſhops were ſhut up for eight days. Among the princes there was Francis de Corrare, who took Petrarch along with him: his health was more eſtabliſhed; he found ſeveral friends who were delighted to ſee him ſo much better, and who ſhewed him every mark of diſtinction.

CARDINAL Anglic was adored at Bologna, and through all Italy; there was no lord more beloved, or who governed with greater wiſdom and prudence; his temper was perfectly amiable. He was recalled to Avignon by his brother ſucceſſor, and died in 1388. One of his executors was Audibert de Sade, the ſon of Laura, for whom he had always had a great affection.

THE Cardinals choſe Peter Roger, the nephew of Clement the VIth, to fill up the place of Urban; he took the name of Gregory the XIth: he had great virtues and great modeſty. Soon after his exaltation, he wrote to Petrarch, whom he had long known and loved, in the moſt polite and flattering manner: in which he expreſſed a great deſire to ſee him, and do him ſome ſervice. In Petrarch's anſwer to Cardinal Bruni, he ſays, "I will receive no benefice with the charge of ſouls, however great the revenue: 1371.

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the charge of my own is ſufficient for me. As to the reſt, let the Holy Father do as he pleaſes; I ſhall be always his ſervant, uſeleſs indeed, but faithful and ſubmiſſive. His generoſity may inſpire me with gratitude, but it will never augment my zeal and my attachment. If he beſtow any office on me, it will be a very ſhort depoſit, for I feel myſelf as a ſhadow vaniſhing away. If it will enable me to expiate my ſins, the ſooner the better. I pray God my purgatory may be compleated in this world."

In a letter to the Cardinal de Cabaſſole, he ſays:

"I had projected to viſit the Pope in the ſpring; my deſign was to go by water as far as I could, and the reſt of the way in ſhort journies byland; but there has been no ſpring this year: a burning ſummer has all at once ſucceeded a very

cold winter. Notwithſtanding this, I had packed up my goods, when I was attacked in May with a violent fever, which has diſappointed my projects. I have been very ill; the phyſicians believed me dead; they ſaid I ſhould not live the night over, and the next day they found me cured. This has happened to me ten times in the laſt ten years." When theſe violent returns of the fever came upon Petrarch, the phyſicians came to him from all the cities in Italy, either ſent by the Princes, or attending him from affection. After many altercations, they agreed he could not live over mid-night, unleſs he was prevented ſleeping; and that by taking ſomething for that purpoſe, he might hold out till morning. No regard was paid to what the phyſicians ſaid, for he had expreſsly commanded his friends and ſervants to do nothing they deſired, but rather the contrary: this ſaved his life, and he ſlept in the moſt tranquil man-

ner. The next morning when the phyſicians re-appeared to behold the accompliſhment of their predictions, what was their aſtoniſhment when they found the man who ſhould have died at midnight, not only alive, but even writing! They contented themſelves with ſaying, Petrarch is not like other men!

In 1371, the Pope ſent the Cardinal de Cabaſſole, as Legate to Peruſia; when he took leave of the Pope, he ſaid to him, "Holy Father! allow me to recommend to you Petrarch, for the love I bear him, which is not to be expreſſed: in truth, he is a phœnix of a man." He went out repeating this with the warmth of a true friend.

The Cardinal of Bologna, after his departure, turned both him and Petrarch into ridicule, whom he was diſguſted with for the freedom with which he declaimed againſt the vices of the court.

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This prelate was intoxicated with great proſperity, and no longer ſupported the character he bore at the time he expreſſed ſo great a friendſhip for Petrarch, who heard of this not by the Cardinal de Cabaſſole, but by accident. "I am not aſtoniſhed, ſays he, at this change. Would you know the reaſon of it? He is the enemy of truth, and I am the enemy of lies: he dreads the liberty with which I am animated, and I deteſt the pride with which he is ſwelled. If our fortunes were equal, and we were together in a place of freedom; I ſay not that I ſhould be a phœnix, that eulogy would not become me; but he would certainly appear an owl. Such people imagine their wealth, ill acquired and worſe employed, permits them to ſay every thing: but there are people who are made eloquent by poverty; and others who are ſtruck dumb by riches."

When the Cardinal de Cabaſſole ar-

rived at Peruſia, he wrote to Petrarch to congratulate him on the reſtoration of his health, and the fortitude he had expreſſed in ſickneſs.

PETRARCH was uneaſy for him, as he had been ill, that he ſhould undergo the fatigues of a journey; ſo that his letter gave him double joy. In his anſwer he expreſſes a great deſire to ſee him once more before he dies: "I have loved you, ſays he, from my youth; you are almoſt the only friend left me on earth. I have been twenty-four years deprived of your ſociety: now that you are in my neighbourhood, if my ill fate does not purſue me through life, I ſhall kiſs that hand from whence I have received ſuch affectionate letters, filled with ſalutary advice and holy conſolations: and agreeable to the indulgence you have long granted me, embrace my dear father with tender affection and ardent zeal: I would recall to him our happy village days,

days, when we paſſed our hours in the woods, ſo abſorbed that we forgot our repaſts; and whole nights in delightful diſcourſe, ſurrounded by our books, till we were ſurpriſed by the appearance of Aurora. You praiſe my courage in ſickneſs: it is true, my phyſicians and my friends were aſtoniſhed to ſee me gay and tranquil in the midſt of pain, without a ſigh or a tear; but this was the gift of Heaven; to Heaven, therefore, be the praiſe!"

In the beginning of the ſpring, Petrarch tried to ſit his horſe, that he might go to ſee his dear friend the Cardinal; but his ſtrength failed, he found he could not bear the leaſt motion. He wrote again to him, to expreſs his regret. 1372.

"You are not, ſays he, like moſt of your brethren, whoſe heads are turned by a bit of red cloth, and who forget that they are men, and mortal. On the

country, theſe honours only make you the more humble; and I do not believe you would change your manner of thinking, was you to be adorned with the imperial diadem."

THIS good Cardinal, ſo worthy the deſcription Petrarch gave of him, could not bear the air of Italy; he was ſick all the time he was there, and died the 26th of Auguſt, 1372. *His body was tranſported* to the Carthuſians of Bonpas, where his monument ſtill remains.

PETRARCH, in a letter to one of his friends, ſpeaks thus of his preſent condition:

"I PASS the greateſt part of the year in the country, which I have always preferred to cities; I read, I write, I think: thus my life and my pleaſures are like thoſe of youth. Having ſtudied ſo long, it is aſtoniſhing that I have learned ſo little:

tle: I hate no one; I envy no one. In that firſt ſeaſon of life, which is full of error and preſumption, I deſpiſed every one but myſelf: in manhood I deſpiſed none but myſelf: in old age I deſpiſe all the world, and myſelf more than all. I reverence none but thoſe I love; and I deſire nothing ardently but to die with piety and honour. I dread a multitude of ſervants as I ſhould a troop of thieves; I would have none, if my age and my weakneſs did not oblige me: I take pains to hide myſelf, but I cannot eſcape viſits; it is an honour that diſpleaſes and wearies me. In my little houſe on the hills of Euganee, I hope to paſs my few remaining days in tranquillity, and to have always before my eyes my dead or my abſent friends.

In 1372, war was again lighted up between Venice and Padua. The country round the latter being ravaged by the enemy, Petrarch went with his books,

which he conſidered as his moſt precious treaſure, to ſhelter himſelf at Padua. A friend adviſed him to put his name upon his door, and to fear nothing, for it would be a ſufficient protection: Petrarch replied, "I would not truſt to that; Mars is not a favourer of the Muſes: I have not ſo exalted an idea of myſelf, as to ſuppoſe this could ſhelter me from the fury of war; I even doubt its advantage to me in peace." He was adviſed to quit Padua; but the bad ſtate of his health, the rigour of the ſeaſon, and the danger of travelling prevented him.

PETRARCH was ſolicited at this time for his Italian works: he ſent them, and theſe lines with them; "I have ſent the trifles you aſk for: they were the amuſement of my youth; but they require all your indulgence: my age muſt excuſe the faults of the ſtyle, the intoxications of love, and the variations of my ſoul. It is a ſhame for an old man to ſend you ſuch

ſuch frivolous productions: but with what face could I refuſe you verſes which are in the hands of every one, are even ſung about the ſtreets, and which the world prefers to thoſe ſolid compoſitions I have made in riper age?"

Francis de Corrare, lord of Padua, perceiving the ſtrength of the Venetians, ſigned a peace on the terms they preſcribed, which were very humbling. One of the articles was, that he ſhould come himſelf, or ſend his ſon, to aſk pardon for the inſults he had been guilty of, and to ſwear an inviolable fidelity. Francis ſent his ſon, and begged Petrarch to accompany him; and though he wiſhed to decline it, he would not, having ſo many obligations to this lord. Accom- 1373.
panied with a great train, they arrived at Venice in September, 1373, where Petrarch was received with the greateſt honour. Whether the majeſty of the ſenate awed him, or his memory was loſt, Pe-

trarch could not pronounce the diſcourſe he had prepared; but ſo great was the deſire to hear him, that they diſmiſſed the aſſembly to the next day: he was then more fortunate; he ſpoke with grace and energy, and was highly applauded. The ſon of Francis Corrare aſked pardon on one knee; the Doge raiſed him, ſaying, "Go, and ſin no more, neither you nor your father!"

FRANCIS ſaid one day to Petrarch, "I am aſtoniſhed, and I am not aſtoniſhed at the good and evil that happens in the world; explain to me this enigma." Petrarch replied, "It is not impoſſible to reconcile the contradiction your genius has propoſed. When you meditate on the corruption of man's heart, you are ſurpriſed at the good they do; but it is the rarity of this virtue cauſes your aſtoniſhment, and that ceaſes when you reflect that it is God who is the author of all good. With reſpect to evil, it is

wonderful to behold the ſon conſpire againſt the father, the brother againſt the brother, the wife againſt her huſband, and the ungrateful man againſt his benefactor; but this wonder ceaſes, when we review the hiſtory of the world, and obſerve what paſſes every day in it. If I have explained your enigma, I ſhall be glad; if I have not, I ſhall learn it moſt willingly from you." This lord loved Petrarch in the tendereſt manner; his greateſt pleaſure was to converſe with him, and he went often to ſee him in his little houſe at Arqua; he ſaid to him one day, "You have written ſomething for all your friends but me."

Petrarch had thought ſome time of compoſing ſomething for this Lord; but he was doubtful on what ſubject to fix. At laſt he compoſed a treatiſe on government, in which he might indirectly praiſe his virtues, and warn him of ſome faults, he had remarked

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in his conduct: the ſentiments of this work would not be at all new to this age; though they were very great for that in which he lived. And he gives a high idea of the talents and virtues of Francis Corrare, in which he agrees with the beſt authors of that time.

1374. AFTER Petrarch's return from Venice, he had not an hour's eaſe, his fever undermined him very ſenſibly; and he languiſhed through a tedious diſorder, expiring by inches. Nevertheleſs he made no change in his manner of living: he paſſed the greateſt part of the day in reading and writing. He happened at this time to meet with the Decameron of Boccace, which he had never ſeen before, though they had been united twenty-four years. He had not time to read it attentively, but he ſpeaks of it in the following manner, in a letter to Boccace.

"I HAVE

"I have only run over your Decameron, and therefore am not capable of forming a true judgment of its merit; but upon the whole, it has given me a great deal of pleaſure: the freedoms in it are excuſable, from having been written in youth, from the ſubjects it treats of, and the perſons for whom it was deſigned. Among a great number of gay and witty jokes, there are, however, many grave and pious ſentiments I did as moſt people do, I payed moſt attention to the beginning and the end. Your deſcription of the people is very true and pathetic, and the touching ſtory of Griſildis has been ever ſince laid up in my memory, that I may relate it in my converſations with my friends. A friend of mine at Padua, a man of wit and knowledge, undertook to read it aloud; but he was ſcarcely got through half of it, when his tears prevented his going on; he attempted it a ſecond time, but his ſighs and ſobs obliged him to deſiſt: another

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of my friends determined on the ſame adventure, and after having read from beginning to the end, without the leaſt alteration of voice or geſture; he ſaid, returning the book, it muſt be owned this is a touching hiſtory, and I ſhould have cried, could I have believed it true, but there never was, nor ever will be a woman like Griſildis."

THIS was *Petrarch's laſt letter*: he cloſes it by ſaying, "adieu my friends, adieu my letters!"

SOON after this he was found dead in his library, July 18, 1374, with one arm leaning on a book. As he had been often ſeen to paſs whole days in this attitude, thoſe who beheld him were not at firſt alarmed; but on a nearer view finding in him no ſigns of life, they gave themſelves up to the moſt bitter grief. It was ſuppoſed he was taken off at laſt by an apoplexy, but as no one was with him, this could

could not be known. His death cauſed a general grief and conſternation; they came from all parts in crowds, to pay their laſt duty to a man who had been the greateſt ornament of their country, and had raiſed its fame on all occaſions. Francis de Corrare, with the biſhop and clergy, and all the nobility of Padua, came to Arqua, to attend his obſequies. The body of Petrarch, dreſſed in a flame-coloured caſſock, which was the habit of the canons of Padua, was carried by ſixteen doctors on a bier, covered with a cloth of gold, lined with ermin, to the pariſh church of Arqua, which was hung in a manner ſuitable to this ſolemn ceremony. After the funeral oration, which was pronounced by Bonaventure de Peraga, of the order of the hermits of St. Auguſtin, the body was interred in a chapel of the Virgin, which Petrarch had built in this church. Some time after, Francis de Broſſano, having raiſed a marble tomb on four

columns,

columns, oppoſite the ſame church, had his body removed thither, and engraved three Latin verſes to his memory: the rhime is their only merit.

Frigida Franſciſci tegit hic lapis oſſa Petrarcæ
Suſcipe, Virgo parens, animam: ſate Virgine parce;
Feſſaque jam terris coeli requieſcat in arce.

In 1667, Paul de Valdezucchi, proprietor of Petrarch's houſe at Arqua, had his buſt in bronze placed on this mauſoleum.

In 1630, ſome perſons broke into this tomb, and took away ſome of Petrarch's bones to ſell them: the ſenate of Venice, enraged at this ſacrilege, puniſhed thoſe who were guilty of it with extreme ſeverity; and in the decree againſt them expreſſed the higheſt reſpect for the aſhes of this great man.

Through all Italy there was a general weeping and lamentation: they all cried

cried out. "The father of letters is no more, the light of our age is extinguiſhed!" Funeral ſongs were compoſed in every city to his memory, and Aretin gives him a diſtinguiſhed place in the great work he compoſed; and Francis Soccheti, one of the beſt Italian poets of that age, compoſed a Canzone, at the beginning of which he repreſents heaven rejoicing, earth lamenting, purgatory weeping, and hell howling at his death. It was at Florence, his native country, they felt his death moſt ſenſibly, for it was there his zeal, his merit, was moſt known; and where the moſt intimate friends he had left reſided, Boccace, Collucio Salutati, and Father Marſili.

As ſoon as Petrarch's will was opened, Francis Broſſano, his heir, ſent to all his friends the ſmall legacies he bequeathed them. When Boccace received his, and the letter wroté with it, he made the following reply:

"When I ſaw your name, I felt immediately the contents of your letter: I had already heard from public report the happy tranſlation of our maſter from this earthly Babylon to the heavenly Jeruſalem. My firſt intention was to have viſited the tomb of my father, and to bid him my laſt adieu, and to mix my tears with your's: but it is now ten months I have been attacked with a languiſhing diſorder, which has weakened and altered me ſo much, you would not know me. I am no longer fat nor freſh-coloured, as when you ſaw me at Venice: my ſides are ſhrunk, my eyes become dim, my hands tremble, and my knees knock againſt one another. After having read your letter, I wept all night for my dear maſter; not indeed for him; his prayers, his faſts, his life, permit me not to doubt his happineſs: but I weep for myſelf, and for his friends, whom he has left in this world, as a veſſel without a pilot in a ſtormy ſea. I judge by my grief of yours,

and

and that of Tullia my dear ſiſter, and your amiable wife, whom I beg you will reaſon with, as well as conſole for her great loſs, which ſhe ought long ago to have expected: women are weaker than men on theſe occaſions, and therefore require their utmoſt aſſiſtance and conſolation."

"I envy Arqua the happineſs it enjoys, in receiving into its boſom the aſhes of a man whoſe heart was the reſidence of the Muſes, the ſanctuary of philoſophy, of eloquence, and the fine arts. This village, hardly known even at Padua, will become famous through the world: it will be reſpected as we reſpect Mount Pauſilippo, becauſe it contains the cinders of Virgil, Ternas and the banks of the Euxine for the tomb of Ovid; and Smyrna, becauſe Homer died and was buried there. The ſailor who returns from the ocean, and who, charged with riches, ſails along the Adriatic ſea, ſhall fall

proſtrate when he diſcovers the hills of Eugance! 'They incloſe, will he cry out, that great Poet who was the glory of the world!' Ah! unhappy country! thou didſt not merit ſuch an honour! Thou haſt neglected to cheriſh the moſt illuſtrious of thy children! Thou wouldſt have careſſed him if he had been capable of treaſon, avarice, envy, and ingratitude: ſo truly is that old proverb verified, 'No one is a prophet in his own country.'

"You propoſe, you ſay, to erect him a mauſoleum: I approve your deſign; but permit me to hint to you one reflection; it is, that the tombs of great men ought never to be raiſed at all, or anſwer in magnificence to the renown of their heroes! This was what fortune did for Pompey: ſhe thought it not proper to encloſe his aſhes in an urn, or to cover his body with the fineſt marble; but ſhe gave him for a ſepulchre, all that region which is watered by the ſea, from Peluſium

ſium to Canope, and the heaven for his monument, that the paſſing traveller might tread lightly, and dread to trample under foot the body of that great man, who had marched over the heads of thoſe kings he had ſubdued by his arms. If he had died with glory in Rome, I doubt whether the mauſoleum of Artemiſia had been equal to his deſert."

My maſter has given me at his death a new proof of his friendſhip and generoſity, of which I have received ſo many proofs during his life: I accept it with gratitude; I wiſh I was not in a ſituation to receive it. I beg of you to inform me what is become of the precious library of this illuſtrious man. They ſay there are perſons commiſſioned to examine his works, and decide their fate: I dread leſt this office ſhould be given to lawyers, who think they know all things, when they have confuſed their heads with the chicaneries of law. God preſerve the

works of my maſter from falling into ſuch hands as theſe! Science has no enemies ſo powerful as ignorant perſons: they are always envious, hide the beſt parts of an author, condemn what they do not underſtand, and corrupt the whole of his works. Be upon your guard; for if things were to go thus, how irreparable would the loſs be to letters in Italy! I heard he had written me a long letter, with a tranſlation he made of the laſt novel of my Decameron, as a compliance with my advice, that he would ſave himſelf as much as poſſible from the fatigue of writing: I have not received theſe kind marks of his attention. I am concerned for the trouble I give you; and beg of you, my dear brother, to conſider me as a friend, and entirely your's.

"My weakneſs is ſo great, that I have been three whole days in writing this letter."

Boccace did not long ſurvive his maſter, he died the twenty-firſt of December, 1375. Collucio Salutati wrote to acquaint Francis Broſſano with this mournful event, and after giving the greateſt praiſe to Boccace, begs Petrarch's poem called Africa. "I will, ſays he, defray all the charges of copying it. I know I do not deſerve this honour, but I will venture to ſay, your putting it into my hands ſhall not tarniſh the glory of Petrarch." Francis ſent it him, deſiring him to correct and not to publiſh it: Salutati's deſign was to have made ſeveral well corrected copies of it to ſend to Bologna, Paris, and England; and to place one in a celebrated houſe in Florence for the uſe of the public. He was prevented by this prohibition, and by finding a chaſm in the poem, either placed apart accidentally by Petrarch, or omitted by the copiers. It ſeems extraordinary that Petrarch ſhould never have ſhewn Boccace a poem he had ſpent ſo much time 1375.

in compoſing, and that he ſhould have been ſo long ignorant of the Decameron; undoubtedly the beſt work of Boccace, and an admirable ſatire on the monks. The latter was probably owing to the reverence of Boccace for Petrarch, who could not think of preſenting him with a work, which being meant to expoſe vice, might probably in ſome parts offend the delicacy and ſublimity of his ſentiments; and Petrarch would not read his poem to Boccace, becauſe he was not ſatisfied with it himſelf.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

WE have now finiſhed the account of Petrarch: and when a life (if I may ſo ſpeak) paints itſelf, it would be a reproach to the reflection of the writer, and a very ill compliment to the penetration of the reader, to attempt to draw it over again by a ſummary of inſipid aſſertions. I ſhall therefore only remark one particular which, with all feeling hearts, will apologize for that unfixed and variable temper ſo juſtly aſcribed to Petrarch, and this was his tender and ardent paſſion for Laura, which entirely unſettled him for twenty years, and produced a reſtleſſneſs in his mind (not formed perhaps by nature in the calmeſt mould) through every ſucceeding period of life. Had his profeſſion and happy lot permitted him to have

have filled up the ſacred and delightful relations of a huſband and father: could he have brought up with tender and virtuous care, the pledges of an honourable affection (as from the principles of humanity and juſtice, he did the innocent offſpring of a diſhonourable one) and thus given a public example of parental virtue: could he have rewarded with his eſteem, and ſoothed with his attention the cares of a tender mother and a faithful wife: how much would it have promoted his happineſs, and heightened his worth! As it was, he frequently led the life of a wanderer, to whom the ſweets of a kind and chearful home are unknown and unhoped for, to alleviate the toils of life, and the diſtreſſes of humanity; and with the fineſt taſte for knowledge, the moſt perfect ſympathy with nature, and the moſt lively and picturesque imagination, he often felt all the languor of diſcontent. His heart was formed for tenderneſs; but alas! it fixed

where its affections could not be ſacredly confirmed. This uncertain ſpring of joy at laſt entirely failed; and his friends, one after another, followed the ſame beaten track.

FROM youth to manhood he was a prey to the keeneſt ſenſibility: from manhood to old age he was ſtruggling to recover a calm and virtuous ſtate of ſoul; but, often pierced with regret for the hours he had loſt in the early part of his life, and with ſorrow for the death of thoſe he tenderly loved, he was continually interrupted in this great and noble purſuit. What a ſtriking leſſon for youth! What an awful leſſon for all human beings! to engage them to ſeize with ardour thoſe fair and unruffled moments that may fix the moſt pure and ſacred principles in their hearts, and lay the foundation of that ſolid peace through life, which once loſt, we have ſeen is never perfectly regained, not even under the influence and direction of the brighteſt

brighteſt underſtanding and the moſt fervent piety.

THOSE Readers who have been intereſted in the fortune of Petrarch, will pity his fate, admire his ſublime and exalted genius, and revere his humble piety, which their candour, penetration, and ſenſibility will draw out to life from this faint and imperfect repreſentation.

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